

Russia upbeat over MENA summit

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday received a message from Russian President Boris Yeltsin, thanking him for his invitation to attend the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit, which will be held in Amman in October and stressing his country's interest in participation. President Yeltsin said Russia, as a co-sponsor of the Middle East peace process, intends to have a high-level participation in the summit, as well as in all efforts designed to achieve a just and lasting peace in the region. The Russian president expressed conviction that the summit will constitute an important landmark on the path of reaching the long-sought peace in this region. The decisions to be adopted at the summit will contribute effectively to creating effective structures aimed to convert the region into a region for real peace and genuine cooperation, President Yeltsin said. He added that the establishment of a large-scale partnership to develop the Middle East and establish economic and social cooperation will have a positive impact on arriving at comprehensive Middle East peace settlement.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية. الراي

Volume 19 Number 5993

AMMAN MONDAY, AUGUST 14, 1995, RABI' AWAL 17, 1416

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

Soames arrives

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — British Minister of State for the Armed Forces Nicholas Soames arrived in Amman Sunday for talks with Jordanian officials over the situation in former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Soames, whose visit here is part of a four-day Middle East tour that includes Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco, was also expected to discuss the situation in Iraq.

In an arrival statement, Mr. Soames said he was "carrying a personal message from Prime Minister John Major to King Hussein concerning the situation in Iraq and Bosnia." He declined to elaborate.

"Events in Bosnia have reached a defining moment," he said. "There are a number of opportunities and dangers ahead and it is important to discuss them with countries in the region."

He declined to comment on the defection of Hussein Kamel Hassan, a close confidant of President Saddam Hussein who defected from Iraq along with his brother, family and escorts.

Mr. Soames is scheduled to meet with King Hussein before his departure Monday.

He hinted that the United Kingdom would defend Jordan in the event of Iraqi retaliation. "Great Britain's record speaks for itself," said Mr. Soames.

Jordan maintains more than 3,200 peacekeepers in the U.S. force in former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Soames, who was appointed to his current position in July and has been a Conservative member of parliament since 1983, is accompanied on his visit to the Kingdom by Air Chief Marshal Sir William Wharton.

Sir William commanded the British air force in the 1991 Gulf war that drove Iraq out of Kuwait.

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Military exercises begin Aug. 18

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and the U.S. will conduct joint military exercises starting Aug. 18, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said. A battalion of regular troops and a special forces unit will be involved in the training exercises, which also include U.S. Marine and Special Forces battalions. The exercise, which is part of the "Armed Forces' joint yearly training plan, aims to upgrade the training capabilities and enhancing their combat readiness through joint exercises with military units from Arab and friendly countries, Petra said.

Jordan-Yemen minutes signed

AMMAN (Petra) — Planning Minister Rima Khalaf Hneidi and her Yemeni counterpart Abdul Qader Bajamal Sunday signed minutes of Jordanian-Yemeni meetings held here this week. Under the minutes, Jordan will provide Yemen with the necessary expertise in the area of development planning, and will train Yemeni cadres. The two sides also agreed to exchange development-related information, publications and research and to form a technical committee to follow up on points of agreements. The two sides stressed the importance of implementing the minutes of the Joint Higher Jordanian Yemeni Committee meetings, which were held in Sanaa last June (see page 3).

Abdul Meguid to visit Algeria

CAIRO (AFP) — The secretary general of the Arab League, Esmat Abdul Meguid, is to visit Algeria for discussions with Algerian President Lamine Zeroual concerning the league's supervision of Algerian elections.

King, Saudi envoy discuss bilateral ties, latest events

High Riyadh official pays first visit to Jordan after Gulf crisis

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday met with a high-ranking Saudi envoy paying the first such visit to Jordan after the Gulf crisis and discussed bilateral relations and the defection of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's son-in-law, official sources said.

Also expected to have been discussed during the meeting was a planned visit to Saudi Arabia by King Hussein for a summit with King Fahd in the first such encounter between the two leaders after relations were strained in the wake of the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti is expected

to visit Riyadh this week to prepare for the summit, which will seal Jordanian-Saudi reconciliation, according to the sources. No detail was available on the timing of the summit.

It will be Mr. Kabariti's second trip to Riyadh in a month and reflects the improvement in relations, which is expected to be capped by the nomination soon of a Saudi ambassador to Jordan.

Riyadh recalled its envoy from Amman in 1991 in protest against what it saw as Jordan's support for Iraq in the Gulf crisis and declined to approve a replacement for the Jordanian ambassador to Saudi Arabia when the diplomat's tenure ended. Early this year, however, the Saudi government accepted a Jordanian ambassador, but has not named a new ambassador to Amman.

The Saudi envoy who was received by the King on Sunday was described by the sources as a leading member of the Saudi royal family. One source identified the envoy as Prince Turki Al Faisal, but it could not be immediately confirmed.

According to the sources,

the King and the Saudi envoy reviewed Jordanian-Saudi relations and the sudden twist in the Middle East situation brought in by the defection of Lieutenant General Hussein Kamel Al Hassan, Iraq's minister of industry and minerals, along with his wife Raghad, President Saddam's eldest daughter, and his brother, Colonel Saddam Kamel, and his wife Rana, the second daughter of the Iraqi president. Jordan has given them asylum (see separate stories).

Closer details of the discussions were not immediately available. Jordan's has improved its relations with Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, which along with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait form the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Mr. Kabariti told a Kuwaiti newspaper last week that he expected ties with Kuwait also to improve soon.

A report that Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah called Mr. Kabariti over the phone on Sunday could not be immediately confirmed.

Iraq offers to disclose arms secrets to U.N.

Aziz says Hussein Kamel hid data

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ ADMITTED Sunday it had withheld weapons secrets from the United Nations but blamed the decision on a minister who defected to Jordan last week.

It asked Rolf Ekeus, who chairs the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM), and Hans Blix, who heads the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), to visit Baghdad "urgently" to obtain the information, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said.

Former Industry Minister Hussein Kamel Hassan, who fled to Jordan on Tuesday had "hidden important information" to give Washington an excuse to block an end to sanctions imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, he said.

Iraq said it gave Mr. Ekeus early this month a final report on its germ warfare programme, described as the remaining obstacle to a lifting of U.N. sanctions. But Mr. Ekeus said later the report was incomplete.

The U.N. Security Council, which meets every two months to review the sanctions, was due to meet again in September.

An opposition member said Iraq suddenly offered to disclose the secrets because it feared General Hassan,

architect of Baghdad's advanced arms programmes, would reveal them first and ruin any chance of lifting sanctions.

Diplomats said Gen. Hassan, who was also head of the Military Industrialization Organisation (MIO), had held talks in Amman with U.S. officials interested in the weapons programme.

"After Hussein Kamel fled, several MIO officials said this traitor had ordered them to hide important information from UNSCOM on Iraq's past weapons programmes," said Mr. Aziz, who is in charge of talks with the United Nations.

Gen. Hassan, President Saddam's son-in-law, "made these MIO officials believe that the orders were from the highest authorities and threatened them with punishment if they disobeyed these orders."

Gen. Amer Rashid, the new MIO director, "today sent a message to Ekeus and Blix, urging them to come urgently to Baghdad and assuring them of Iraq's readiness to submit the information Hussein Kamel had hidden," Mr. Aziz said.

An Iraqi opposition member, Aziz Alayan, said that the defection of Gen. Hassan — along with his brother and their wives, both daughters of Saddam Hussein — had

forced Baghdad's hand. "It's a desperate attempt to save the regime by circumventing Hussein Kamel, who knows the details of all the arms programmes," Mr. Alayan said.

Mr. Alayan added that Gen. Hassan had often travelled to the United States, Europe and China in the 1980s to buy weapons.

A key aide and cousin to President Saddam meanwhile pledged his family's loyalty to the Iraqi leader and called for the death of Gen. Hassan.

Gen. Ali Hassan Al Majid, a cousin of Gen. Hassan, said the Majid family had "disowned" the defector.

Iraq's state-run media also said the vast majority of Iraqis remained loyal to President Saddam while it announced the government's plans to fight corruption and treason.

"The sacrifice of his blood and his life (Gen. Hassan's) tolerated for his cowardly act and betrayal," Gen. Majid, a top official in the ruling Baath Party and former defence minister, said in a letter published in official newspapers.

Gen. Majid, 52, travelled to Amman last Thursday with President Saddam's oldest son, Uday, after Jordan gave the defectors political asylum.

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Deputies say Jordan should not be a base for Iraqi opposition

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Members of the Lower House of Parliament on Sunday welcomed Jordan's move to grant asylum to the Iraqi president's son-in-law and his families but criticised what they saw as the Kingdom's agreement to grant the Iraqi opposition the ground to launch their operations against another "brotherly" Arab country.

The House is expected to convene today in a special session to discuss the Jordanian move.

Several deputies, interviewed by the Jordan Times on Sunday, lauded the Kingdom's hospitality for Iraq's asylum-seekers but strongly criticised and expressed astonishment at "what followed later."

Opposition deputies warned of "serious consequences" for the Kingdom if it was used as a base for Iraqi opposition.

"Jordan has been always known for its hospitality," the head of the House's Foreign Affairs Committee, Abdullah Nsour, told the Jordan Times. "But Jordan has never been known to have interfered in other countries' internal affairs. It has never been involved in terrorist attacks or military coup d'etats."

Iraqi Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel Hassan and his brother Saddam Kamel and their wives — both daughters of President Saddam — arrived last week in Jordan seeking asylum.

General Hussein announced in a press conference on Saturday that he would work with Iraqi groups inside and outside Iraq to topple the Iraqi regime.

Dr. Nsour said that this move might anger the Iraqi government. This feeling was widely shared by opposition deputies who regarded Jordan's position as an "unhealthy" and said it might lead to "undesired consequences."

Bassam Amoush, an Islamic Action Front (IAF) deputy, said Jordan should not be involved in other countries' internal affairs and warned of serious consequences for Jordan.

"By taking them (the Iraqis) in and allowing them to operate against another Arab country, Jordan sets a precedent," Dr. Amoush said. "It is an aggression on Jordan's part."

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A Palestinian wounded by gunfire from Israeli settlers at an Israeli settlement on Sunday. The man is being carried by other Palestinians. He died of his wounds (AFP photo)

Israeli cabinet adopts redeployment accord

Jewish settlers kill Palestinian

DURA AL QARA (Agencies) — Israel's government approved an agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on expanding Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank Sunday, as two weeks of protests by Jewish settlers against the plan turned violent for the first time.

Witnesses said settlers opened fire on Palestinians who ransacked their camp on a rocky West Bank hilltop, killing 22-year-old Kheiri Al Qaisi. Settlers denied they caused his death.

Israel's cabinet approved an agreement under which Israeli soldiers would withdraw in stages from much of the West Bank no later than July 1997. The vote was 15-1 in favour, with two ministers abstaining.

Some ministers criticised the pact, worked out last week in 20 hours of meetings

between Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, for forcing Israeli troops to withdraw too quickly. Major gaps remained over sharing the West Bank's water and how to provide security for Hebron, where 450 Israeli settlers live among 110,000 Palestinians.

Opposition lawmakers, and even some members of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's ruling coalition, said the accord was too far-reaching and constituted in effect an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, a peace negotiator and outspoken dove, maintained the West Bank autonomy was in line with the September 1993 Israel-PLO accord. But he agreed that "although officially there is not going to be a Palestinian state, as far as I can judge the

situation, it is a Palestinian state."

Mr. Sarid said that Israeli and PLO delegations were resuming talks on a detailed accord in Taba, Egypt, Sunday night. Israeli media said the full agreement was expected in early September.

Sunday's shooting was the first serious violence since settlers began their campaign against the West Bank autonomy. The settlers, claiming a withdrawal would put them in danger, are demanding a national referendum on any agreement with the PLO.

Witnesses said about 100 Palestinians from Dura Al Qara village went to a bare hill settlers had squatted on since late last week near Beit El settlement north of Ramallah.

The Palestinians tore down makeshift structures the set-

(Continued on page 7)

Serbs face new Croat and Muslim offensives

BANJA LUKA, Bosnia-Herzegovina (Agencies)

Fighting broke out on two fronts in Bosnia while diplomats scrambled to forge peace from a new balance of power in the four-year-old war.

Russia and the United States meanwhile met to try to align their peace plans for former Yugoslavia but the fresh combat on the battlefield of Bosnia undermined the difficulties ahead for diplomacy.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and U.S. National Security Adviser Anthony Lake met in the Black Sea resort of Sochi as Bosnian government forces kept up an attack on Serb-held Donji Vakuf in central Bosnia.

Mr. Lake, visiting Russia as part of a whistle-stop tour of several European countries, made no comments to

journalists as he left after two and half hours of talks.

It was not clear whether any official statement would be issued.

The meeting was set up on Thursday to try to coordinate separate peace plans drawn up by Washington and Moscow in the wake of a Croatian offensive that appeared to radically alter the balance of power in the Yugoslav conflict.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin has called for direct talks between the leaders of Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia to be followed by an international conference with their participation.

On Saturday Washington said it would send Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke to Sarajevo, Zagreb and Belgrade.

After a lull of several days, Croats around the resort city of Dubrovnik began a cross-

border attack Saturday towards the Serb-held town of Trebinje in southern Bosnia. U.N. spokesman Chris Vernon in Sarajevo said several thousand Serbs already had left Trebinje.

About 170 kilometres to the north, Bosnian government forces attacked around Donji Vakuf in an offensive that appeared aimed at the larger town of Jajce. Its capture would be a big morale boost for the Bosnian army and put it closer to the Serb stronghold of Banja Luka to the north.

"The Bosnian army is making progress," said U.N. spokesman Major Carlos Alonso.

He could not say how much, however. The United Nations said the two offensives were difficult to gauge because its access had been restricted.

Jordanian option not yet spelt out, but many see a significant shift

By Natasha Bukhari

THE DEFECTION to Jordan last week of President Saddam Hussein's two daughters and their husbands, the powerful former Minister of Industry Lt. Gen. Hussein Kamel Hassan and his brother Col. Saddam Hassan, has raised the spectacle of a new policy being adopted by Jordan vis-a-vis Iraq — a policy whereby neutrality is replaced by active engagement in shaping Iraq's future.

His Majesty King Hussein, apart from quickly granting refuge to the Iraqi asylum seekers, has not said his final word on what option Jordan should adopt vis-a-vis the situation in Iraq which is becoming almost impossible for the Iraqis to bear. While the government of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker officially maintains that there has been no shift in the Kingdom's policy of non-interference in Iraq's internal affairs, observers and politicians, including even members of the Cabinet, generally agree that the country is bracing for taking a major step towards playing a new role in what is happening in Iraq.

Royal Court and to call for the overthrow of the Iraqi regime. Some of them even think the defection was fore-planned and the whole episode engineered in such a way that would inevitably make Jordan change policy vis-a-vis Iraq. There have been attempts by the government to explain the choice of the Palace as the venue for Gen. Hassan to hold his conference and to issue his call for toppling the Baghdad regime.

One was that security considerations lay behind it. Another maintained that it happened because the General is considered to be a personal guest of the King. And the third official line contended that the

press conference was a "one-time" event after which the commotion around the minister's defection would die down — and he may even leave town altogether after a short period of stay in Amman.

ANALYSIS

"There are no political dimensions behind (granting the asylum)," Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti was quoted as saying. "What Iraq is witnessing in terms of events is an internal affair and the Jordanian government has nothing to do with it."

In any case Jordan has been distancing itself for

some time now from the Saddam regime, and what Jordanians really care about is to alleviate the plight of Iraqis, without telling them what to do with their political system and leadership, the official line goes.

But few outside the government seem to accept these explanations. Some opposition figures even fear that Jordan might become the base for a U.S.-backed effort to overthrow the Iraqi regime (see related story on this page).

Politicians and analysts interviewed by the Jordan Times generally believe that there will be a change in Iraq soon and Jordan had better be prepared for that

change. "We cannot be just a bystander. If someone does take a position that serves Iraq, we have to support it," says Senator Kamal Shaer. "Jordan's relations with Iraq have always been governed by three principles," Sen. Shaer maintains. "They are respect by Iraq for U.N. Security Council resolutions and the charter of the Arab League; the political, economic and social well-being of Iraqis; and the preservation of the national and territorial integrity of Iraq."

"To the extent that these principles are respected, so would our relations with (the Iraqi regime) be," the senator says. "Saddam has

failed to respect these principles, thus prompting Jordan to stand by anyone who wants to correct that regime's stand."

While some believe that Jordan's stand in harbouring defectors who are threatening the Iraqi regime is contradictory to the Jordanian call for alleviating the suffering of Iraqis, Dr. Shaer believes that "Jordan does not have any attachment to certain individuals. Its main concern is for individuals to adhere to the above principles."

King Hussein last month reiterated his call for an end to the plight of Iraqi people by lifting the sanctions

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Iraqi defector may be unwilling to share secrets

By Jane Arraf
Reuters

WASHINGTON — Hussein Kamel Hassan's defection has shaken his father-in-law Saddam Hussein's regime but the former official who holds Iraq's deepest military secrets may not be willing to share them with the West.

Analysts said the lieutenant general, who made a dramatic call on Saturday to Iraqi soldiers and civilians to help overthrow President Saddam, could jeopardise the influence he hopes to maintain at home if he hands over Iraq's carefully-guarded secrets.

"Getting Iraq's deepest secrets might be a tough nut to crack," said Phoebe Marr, a senior fellow at the Pentagon's Institute for National Strategic Studies and author of a history of Iraq.

She said General Hassan risked being branded a traitor by military men left to face deteriorating conditions in Iraq and weakening his influence within a potentially significant core of nationalist opposition to President Saddam outside Iraq.

U.S. officials refused to say whether they had been in contact with Gen. Hassan, who arrived on Saturday in Amman on King Hussein's doorstep with his brother, Saddam Kamel Hassan, who was in charge of President Saddam's guards, and their wives, both of whom are President Saddam's daughters.

At a palace press conference in Amman on Saturday, Gen. Hassan sidestepped questions about his contacts with the United States, emphasising that he had been in touch with Iraqi

dissidents inside and outside Iraq.

Although he was treated in Amman in February for what Jordanian officials said was a brain tumour, Gen. Hassan, in his early 50s, appeared fit and brimming with bravado.

Some described the brothers' defections in what was already a shrinking circle of loyalty to President Saddam as possibly the biggest blow to the Iraqi leader's stability since he quelled Kurdish and Shiite rebellions after the 1991 Gulf war.

"He's about as close to Saddam as you can get," said one State Department source with long experience of Iraq.

After Saddam's sons, Gen. Hassan, a man with only primary school education but known as an orga-

nisational genius, was perhaps the most important man in the small and secretive circle of power surrounding the Iraqi leader.

Married to President Saddam's daughter Raghda, he built up Iraq's military machine, including its illicit procurement network, established military special forces and the elite Republican Guard and headed reconstruction after the 1991 Gulf war which drove Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

"His conversations with U.N. officials could be very important to that," said an administration official, referring to Gen. Hassan's knowledge of the arms programmes.

"We have said all along that Iraq must comply with all Security Council resolutions, particularly the ones

concerning weapons of mass destruction... what new information he can bring to that, I really don't know... we shall see," he said.

U.S. officials and analysts said the former head of military industrialisation, who has led negotiations with U.N. officials dismantling Iraq's weapons programmes, handled the concealment of operations that frustrated efforts to rid Iraq of its deadliest arms after the Gulf war.

"He's the one who maintained the secret programmes for years and he knows how to deceive," said Ms. Marr.

Although they say they are slowly getting the information from other sources, the United Nations believes Iraq is still conceal-

ing information on its biological weapons programme — key reasons for maintaining crippling trade sanctions against Baghdad.

"I'm sure he could be very, very valuable if he wanted to talk, but it's not certain that he will," said one European official who analyses Iraq.

Several Iraq-watchers said Gen. Hassan, who was believed to have serious rifts with President Saddam's son Uday over power and money, was seen as being a relative moderate in President Saddam's circle.

"I always believed he wanted to agree to 706 and 712," said one official, referring to the U.N. resolutions repeatedly rejected by Iraq which would have allowed Baghdad to sell limited amounts of oil under international supervision.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sudanese army capture town from rebels

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Government troops in southern Sudan have recaptured the town of Kaya, in western Equatoria, from the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the armed forces announced Sunday in a communiqué. The statement broadcast on official radio said that government troops at sunset Saturday "liberated" the strategic town of Kaya "from the SPLA which control many parts of west Equatoria state. The area straddles the juncture border point of Sudan, Zaire and Uganda. The communiqué did not give a toll of casualties and said government troops were fully committed to "agreements and accords and therefore confined their activities to administrative movements and defending their sites."

"Upon numerous attacks by the rebels on Bazi garrison (an army post) our troops commenced with the task of crushing the rebels and birlings and restored the strategic town of Kaya as a gift to the Sudanese people on the 41st Sudanese army day celebration."

Jailed 'drug queen' turns out to be a man

CAIRO (AFP) — A drug dealer arrested three years ago in the Egyptian capital went into prison classified as a woman and turned out after his sentencing to be a man, the government daily Al Akhbar reported on Saturday. The unnamed man was known as "the queen of the drug dealers" by locals in the Cairo slum of Imbaba where he worked, since they had known him as a girl since childhood. After the dealer's arrest, authorities made the same mistake and put him in a women's prison. But they soon realised he was a man and transferred him to another facility, Al Akhbar said. When released he returned home, facility, Al Akhbar said. When released he returned home, facility, Al Akhbar said. When released he returned home, facility, Al Akhbar said.

Libya praises U.S. stop to nuclear testing

TRIPOLI (AFP) — Libya praised on Saturday U.S. President Bill Clinton's commitment to halt all nuclear testing but cast doubt on his ability to uphold the decision, the state news agency JANA reported. "The American commitment constitutes an important support of the international community aiming to put an end to nuclear proliferation and reduce its dangers," JANA said. "But the acts of certain agencies in the American government more powerful than the president lead us to doubt the credibility of his statements," it added. It cited as an example what it called "the secret transfer" in late 1994 of 600 kilograms of radioactive uranium from Kazakhstan to an American nuclear power station. "To make President Clinton's statements credible this uranium must be handed over to the International Atomic Energy Agency," JANA said.

Russian diplomat to visit sick captive

DUBAI (R) — A Sharjah-based Russian air company said on Sunday it was awaiting the outcome of an expected visit to Kandahar by a Russian diplomat to discuss the fate of a seriously ill employee held captive by an Afghan militia. Viktor Riazanov, one of seven airmen held by the Islamic Taliban militia in Afghanistan, has been described as seriously sick by a doctor who visited him. A commander of the militia, which forced the men's Ilyushin 76 plane to land 10 days ago and took the crew captive when they found it was carrying ammunition, has said he would allow Mr. Riazanov to leave if his firm sent a replacement captive. An official from the air company Trans Avia, told Reuters by telephone from Sharjah, one of the United Arab Emirates seven states, "we are awaiting the (Russian) diplomat's arrival in Kandahar and the outcome of his talks."

Egyptian Coptic leader in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Pope Shenouda III of Egypt's Coptic Orthodox Church arrived here Saturday for a 12-day visit to South Africa, a statement by the church said. Pope Shenouda was to meet clergy from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Zaire, the statement added. He is also expected to meet President Nelson Mandela, deputy president Thabo Mbeki and Frederik de Klerk, and various provincial premiers. Pope Shenouda will lay the foundation stone for a church in KwaZulu-Natal province and consecrate churches in Cape Town and in Free State province, the statement said.

New president for Israel's supreme court

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Justice Aharon Barak was sworn in Sunday as the new president of Israel's Supreme Court bringing to the job a reputation as a strongly independent liberal. The 59-year-old, who was born in Lithuania and emigrated to Israel in 1947, was the Israeli legal adviser in the drawing up of the Camp David peace accords with Egypt in 1978. He was appointed to the supreme court the same year and served as deputy president from 1993. He set a trend for justices to overrule government decisions. Mr. Barak is expected to introduce judicial review of legislation for the first time in Israel, which some lawyers predict will lead to clashes with parliament. Attorney general from 1975-1978, he takes over from Meir Shamgar who is retiring at the age of 70.

Egyptian 'pirates' loot Philippines boat

CAIRO (AFP) — Six armed Egyptian "pirates" raided a Philippines ship in the Suez Canal and stole 24 television sets, the government daily Al Akhbar reported Sunday. The six thieves boarded the ship at the southern entrance to the canal, 40 kilometres from the port of Suez. They loaded their booty in their own boat and escaped, the paper said. But they were arrested several days later on the Suez-Ismailiya road alongside the canal, driving a lorry with stolen goods inside.

Israel-PLO statement

FOLLOWING IS the text of a joint statement agreed by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel after a week of negotiations on an interim agreement for the spread of autonomy across the West Bank was made public on Sunday.

Points still in dispute are given as (I) Israeli proposals, and (P) Palestinian proposals.

Area B covers rural zones. Area C covers settlements and sites to remain under Israeli control.

Joint statement

The Palestinian delegation headed by President Yasser Arafat and the Israeli delegation headed by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, met in Tabá, Egypt, between Aug. 7-11, 1995, and agreed on some of the principles to be elaborated in the Interim Agreement as follows:

1. Area B: In Area B there will be a complete redeployment of Israeli military forces. The Palestinian police shall assume responsibility for public order for Palestinians and shall establish (I: 25) (P: 30) police stations and posts in towns, villages and other places as agreed.

In Area B Israel shall have the overriding responsibility for security for the purpose of protecting Israel and confronting the threat of terrorism. While the (I: activities) (P: movement) of uniformed Palestinian policemen in Area B outside places where there is a Palestinian police station will be carried out after coordination and confirmation, three months after the completion of redeployment from Area B, the DCOs (District Coordination and Cooperation Offices) may decide that movement of Palestinian policemen from the police stations in Area B to Palestinian towns traffic will take place after notifying the DCO.

These procedures will be reviewed within six months.

2. Further redeployments: The further redeployments of Israeli military forces to specified military locations will be gradually implemented in accord-

ance with the DOP (Declaration of Principles) in three intervals, every six months, after the inauguration of the council, to be completed by (P: February) 1997. In Area C, while Israel will transfer civil powers and responsibilities not relating to territory in the first phase of redeployment, powers and responsibilities relating to territory will be transferred gradually to Palestinian jurisdiction that will cover West Bank and Gaza Strip territory, except for issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations, during the further redeployment phases to be completed by (P: February) (I: July) 1997.

3. Hebron: With regard to Hebron both sides exchanged ideas and decided to continue the negotiations on this issue.

4. Prisoners: In addition to the two stages of prisoner release agreed in the context of the Ministerial Committee (one upon the signing of the interim agreement and the other — before the Palestinian elections), there will be a third stage of prisoner release. The Ministerial Committee will work out the details of this third stage.

5. Revenues: The Israeli side will transfer tax revenues to the Palestinian side upon the signing of the interim agreement.

6. Joint committee: A joint Israeli-Palestinian-American committee will be formed to deal with (1) economic issues, (2) water production and (3) political coordination.

7. The Palestinian Covenant: Two months after the inauguration of the Palestinian Council, the Palestinian covenant will be amended in accordance with the letter of Chairman Arafat to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, dated Sept. 9, 1993.

Hammad, Khatib promise better bridge facilities

AMMAN (J.T.) — Ministers of Interior and Tourism Salameh Hammad and Abdul Ilah Al Khatib on Sunday inspected services at the bridges across the Jordan River and the newly opened Sheikh Hussein Bridge in the northern Jordan Valley sector and announced that immediate action will be taken to deal with shortages related to services for travellers and tourists.

The aim of the visit was to ensure that visitors travelling in both directions are accorded essential services like fresh and cold water for drinking and air conditioned rest rooms as well as prompt and very cordial reception to all travellers. Arabs and foreigners alike, said Mr. Hammad in a statement to Jordan Television.

In addition, he said, there is urgent need for increasing the number of buses on both sides of the river to transport the travellers to and from the other side, adding that the government will take prompt action to provide these essential services that have been lacking.

The Minister also said that he will contact the Ministry of Public Works in order to build the required shelters to provide protection from the sun as a



Interior Minister Salameh Hammad and the Sheikh Hussein bridge across the River Jordan on Sunday (Petra photo)

temporary solution pending the construction of appropriate facilities.

Mr. Khatib said these essential services will be provided as soon as possible, especially in view of the growing influx of tourists to the Kingdom in the wake of the signing of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

Referring to the situation at the Sheikh Hussein

Bridge, the minister said, that efforts are being exerted on daily basis to improve the services for the visitors, adding that the ministry of tourism was determined to address various shortages and deal with all the problems.

The two ministers first called at the King Hussein Bridge where baggage facilities and air conditioned

halls have been provided. Work is underway for the construction of an additional hall for arrivals, a project that is expected to be completed by the end of this month.

The Prince Mohammad Bridge is solely used for trucks transporting West Bank and Gazan goods to Jordan and other Arab countries.

Ciller seeks to boost economic ties with C. Asia

ANKARA (AFP) — When the Soviet Union crumbled in 1991, Ankara rushed in to establish ties with its Central Asian and Azeri cousins, fuelling fears — or hopes for some — of a pan-Turkish creation.

Three years have gone by and the excitement has faded, but Turkey is still working to strengthen its economic foothold in the Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan and in the Caucasus republic of Azerbaijan.

Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, leaving Monday on her second trip to the region in two months, will push for more trade, a huge oil pipeline deal and eventually a highway linking Central Asia to Turkey, officials said.

She takes with her a team of 50 businessmen, her energy minister and other officials on a five-day tour. "We are planning to develop our relations with

Central Asia, to progress rapidly," said Nurettin Nurgali, a foreign ministry spokesman.

Turkish cooperation with the newly independent states dropped somewhat last year after initial credits, investments and trade worth more than two billion dollars were launched in 1992.

Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, the biggest and most economically viable of the group, got up to 250 million dollars each, the heaviest share of credits from Turkey's Export and Import Bank (EtilBank).

Less than \$200 million went to the smaller Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan. But most of the countries used up or received less than half their allocations by last spring, and trade with Turkey in 1994 was disappointing.

Not only were the new states to blame, with their tight bureaucracy, slow debt servicing and poor in-



Tansu Ciller

fracture, but Turkey also went through its own crisis in 1994 as its currency plunged and austerity measures were imposed.

"There was indeed a lot of euphoria at the beginning," a western diplomat said. "Turkey tried to do a lot

at first, but Central Asia is very isolated and doesn't have the resources, so there has had to be a change in expectations," said the diplomat, requesting anonymity.

Ankara has scaled down its ambitions, relying more on its private sector after an initial government thrust to secure influence ahead of Iran and to match Russia's power. Iran borders Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan.

At the time, the president, Turgut Ozal, announced "The 21st Century will be Turkish."

And his prime minister, now President Suleyman Demirel, spoke of a "Turkish bridge to the Great Wall of China."

But in the meantime Russia has proven to be as present as ever, providing machinery and much of the infrastructure to the new republics. All members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00... Animals of Farthing Wood
14:30... Hic Dog
15:00... Survival
16:00... Families
17:00... Children's programme — Doug
17:30... Film: "Aime-Tot Journaux"
18:00... News in French
19:15... French Varieties
19:30... News Headlines
19:35... Camp Wilder
20:00... McCall's Navy
20:30... The Bold and the Beautiful
21:15... Hearts of the West
22:00... News in English
22:25... The Ruth Rendell Mysteries
23:25... Film: "Torn Between Two Lovers"

PRAYER TIMES

04:29... Fajr
05:54... (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:40... Dhuhr
16:20... Asr
19:27... Maghrib
21:51... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 810740
Antesties of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 623526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Hot weather conditions will continue to prevail today with winds: northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman... 21/26
Aqaba... 27/41
Dead Sea... 20/40
Jordan Valley... 25/41

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 36, Aqaba 40 Humidity readings: Amman 32 per cent, Aqaba 29 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Ghazi Abu Sheikha... 752405
Dr. Shaima Abu Zaid... 770665
Dr. Walid Al Masri... 675485
Dr. Yousef Rashid... 896301
Firas pharmacy... 661912
Ferdous pharmacy... 778336
Al Asena pharmacy... 670555
Naima pharmacy... 623672
Al Salem pharmacy... 636730
Yacoub pharmacy... 644945
Shameis pharmacy... 637660
Naima pharmacy... 623672
Najib pharmacy... 847632

ERBID:
Dr. Ali Al Omari... 770352
Alquta pharmacy... (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Fawaz Hamdallah... 963544
Khalid pharmacy... 965417

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642816

ERBID:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642816

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre... 637111

AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)3320-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:20... Sanas (RJ)
09:00... Damascus (RJ)
09:30... Jordan (RJ)
10:00... New Delhi (RJ)
10:10... Beirut (RJ)
10:30... Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:35... Beirut (RJ)
10:45... Cairo (RJ)
10:50... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
10:55... Bangkok (RJ)
11:00... Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
11:05... Tunis (RJ)
11:10... Milan (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

10:50... Khartoum (SD)
11:00... Moscow, Abu Dhabi (GF)
11:05... Kiev (RU)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:40... Beirut (RJ)
11:05... Tunis (RJ)
12:15... Milan (RJ)
12:30... Cairo (RJ)
13:10... Rome (RJ)
13:25... London (RJ)
13:30... Frankfurt (RJ)
14:00... Amsterdam, Montreal (GF)
14:15... Damascus (RJ)
14:45... Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
15:15... Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
15:20... 'Al Ain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:00... Istanbul (TK)
06:35... London (RJ)
07:30... Rome (RJ)
08:45... Beirut (RJ)
12:00... Khartoum (SD)
14:00... Doha (GF)
14:30... Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Muscat (GF)
15:30... Kiev (RU)
15:45... Cairo (RJ)
16:00... Dubai (RJ)
16:10... Amsterdam (RJ)
16:20... Damascus, London (RJ)
16:30... Amsterdam (RJ)
16:40... Muscat (add) (GF)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jls per kg.

Apple... 700/500
Banana... 600
Banana (Mukammal)... 600
Cabbage... 120/80
Carrot... 320/220
Cauliflower... 250/180
Cucumbers (large)... 180/100
Cucumbers (small)... 300/200
Eggplant... 180/100
Figs... 420/320
Garlic... 680/500
Grapes... 400/300
Lemon... 180/100
Marrow (large)... 560/400
Marrow (small)... 150/100
Mulukhiyah... 340/220
Okra... 120/70
Onion (dry)... 120/60
Orange... 200/100
Peaches... 450/300
Peas... 180/100
Pepper (hot)... 150/100
Pepper (sweet)... 160/100
Potato... 380/280
String Beans... 440/350
Sweet Melon... 250/150
Tomato... 130/80
Water Melon... 120/70

Home

NOTHING OF A DRINK OF WATER a moment to drink (photo by Youssef)

Ministries returned to

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation, supported by the Ministry of Agriculture, has been investigating what is the best utilisation of the Jordan-Israel peace agreement according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

In a statement, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation said the Ministry of Agriculture has been investigating what is the best utilisation of the Jordan-Israel peace agreement according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation is willing to share its experience in water management with the Jordanian farmers on the Jordan River and to provide technical assistance in the region and to provide technical assistance in the region and to provide technical assistance in the region.

Initial studies show the areas in question have estimated 20 million metres of underground water, and that the area expected to have more resources after the completion of dams in the Jordan Valley, the minister said.

Apart from experience

W

FUHEIS F

"Concert by Wadi" main theatre at 9:

* Several exhibitions tourism sector: Ka Jordanian Prime M Tal, Al Rai Arab anniversary: Germ gle against fascis churches, abstract art.

FILM

"Pella in Jordan" Hameed Shoman Jabel Amman at 6: will be followed by tary by Dr. Pam W

PLAY

"The Maids" (tw Genet) starring Ma



NOTHING QUENCHES THE THIRST OF A 'BIG MAN' LIKE A COOL DRINK OF WATER: A young resident of Hussein Camp in Jabal Hussein takes a moment to drink down some water on one of the summer's more sweltering days (photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

Yemen, Jordan explore prospects in energy projects cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Yemeni Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Social Development and Planning Abdul Qader Bajamal met in Amman Sunday with Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Samih Darwazah and said later that Yemen welcomes Jordanian help to exploit and develop its mineral resources including oil and natural gas.

Mr. Bajamal said that the aim of his several-day visit to Jordan is to try to benefit from the Kingdom's experience especially in electric energy generation, training of Yemeni personnel in Jordanian institutions and in telecommunications as well as in the privatisation process.

He said that his talks with Jordanian officials covered cooperation in developing laws governing mining, and future cooperation in exploiting mineral resources in Yemen and Jordan.

At the meeting ministry Secretary General Ahmad Bashir and Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) Director General Mohammad Arafah outlined the development of electricity projects in Jordan and plans for future projects.

They also reviewed areas where the two sides have been cooperating in the implementation of electricity projects in Yemen and explored prospects for cooperation in prospecting for oil

and natural gas. Jamal Ragheb, head of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources department responsible for administrative affairs outlined steps being taken for the privatisation of the JEA.

Also reviewed was progress on a \$2.5 million project to link the grids of Taiz and Aden, two cities in Yemen which JEA engineers are supervising.

Following the meeting Mr. Bajamal and his delegation were received by Minister of Information Khaled Karaki with whom they reviewed cooperation between Yemen and Jordan in information related fields.

The two sides also discussed upgrading existing agreements and protocols which regulate bilateral cooperation in information.

JEA, Yemeni corporation sign agreement

Also Sunday, a committee charged with organising cooperation between Jordan and Yemen in electric energy production concluded a meeting here by signing minutes of its deliberations held over the past week which will establish a mechanism for future cooperation in electricity production and distribution as well as the exchange of expertise.

The minutes were signed



Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Samih Darwazah Sunday meets with Deputy Prime Minister of Yemen Abdul Qader Bajamal and a visiting delegation to review prospects of cooperation in energy related areas (Petra photo)

by Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) Director General Mohammad Arafah and Ahmad Al Aini, director of the Yemeni Electricity Corporation.

According to Anwar Kamal, a senior JEA engineer, the two sides revised the decisions on mutual cooperation in electric power taken in previous

meetings held in Sanaa in 1992 and the decisions taken by the higher joint ministerial committee which convened in Sanaa in June.

Mr. Kamal said that in their minutes the two sides renewed a bilateral agreement on cooperation in electricity fields and projected the Yemeni side's request to acquire JEA expertise in

matters related to privatisation, training of personnel and administrative development.

He said the two sides also reviewed progress in a project to link the grids of Taiz and Aden, two cities in Yemen. The project is being supervised by JEA engineers.

Ministries study best way to use lands returned to Jordan under peace treaty

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation, supported by the Ministry of Agriculture, has begun to investigate what would be the best utilisation of lands returned to Jordan under the Jordan-Israel peace treaty, according to Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif.

In a statement to Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times, the minister said the most feasible use of the estimated 2,300 dunums located in the Wadi Araba region and in the northern parts of the Kingdom was farming.

The Ministry of Agriculture is willing to advise farmers on the choice of trees most suitable for the region and to provide general expertise in this respect, Mr. Ben Tarif said.

Initial studies show that the areas in question have an estimated 20 million cubic metres of underground water, and that the area is expected to have more water resources after the construction of dams in the Jordan Valley, the minister added.

Apart from expertise and

training, the ministry will grant loans to farmers to start their business, said the minister.

He said that the exploitation of these territories requires the drilling of artesian wells, laying waterpipe networks and an infrastructure similar to the one adopted by the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) in other parts of the Jordan Valley.

He said that at least JD 1,000 will be spent on each dunum as capital expenditure prior to the actual utilisation of the land.

Concerned authorities will divide the lands into units allotting at least 80 dunums of land for each farming project in order to ensure sufficient profit.

The minister said that the utilisation of these lands could, on the other hand, be undertaken by private sector companies. If the JVA decides on this option, he said, the companies will have to finance the infrastructure work, the drilling of the wells and laying the irrigation network systems instead of the ministries and the JVA.



Mansour Ben Tarif

National companies have expressed interest in developing land for profit in similar ventures as those in the Disi districts where cereal is being grown, the minister said.

Government, investors discuss problem of delay in Dead Sea land development

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government and potential investors held a meeting on Sunday to review the delays and problems impeding the use of state-owned land on the shore of the Dead Sea for tourism projects.

The meeting, the third of its kind after the government invited project proposals from investors, reviewed the status of applications for leasing land.

The meeting decided to extend until Aug. 31 a deadline for investors to submit additional details of projects and to reduce leasing fees.

Instead of JD 2,500 per dunum per year, the lease was reduced to JD 1,000.

But investors said they still hope that the government would further reduce it or allow yearly payments instead of the sought-for bulk payment for 10 years in advance.

Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irsheidat, who chaired the meeting, said the delay in finalising the applications so far was mainly

due to the slow formation of what he described as a comprehensive national strategy for tourism in the country.

"The development of the eastern shores of the Dead Sea should be compatible with that of the Aqaba area" on the Red Sea, the minister told the meeting.

He expressed hope that Sunday's meeting will be the "last but one" before the issue is streamlined.

More than 60 project proposals — for hotels, health spas, recreation centres and other facilities for tourists — have been submitted to the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), which owns most of the land on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea.

Some of the proposals were submitted more than one year ago, and complaints were heard before Sunday's meeting that little logic could be found to explain the delay.

The area under immediate consideration is about four-square-kilometers, and many questioned why it was taking so long for the authorities to study the proposals.

Rassam Kofash, who has

submitted two proposals — one for a JD 2 million tourism village and other for a JD 1 million floating restaurant — said he was frustrated by the delay.

"We already own the seven dunums of land where we plan to build the JD 2 million tourism village," Mr. Kofash said.

As such, he noted, his application was not for leasing/buying state-owned land, but for approval of the project.

Referring to the government's argument that infrastructure services, mainly water and power, were not immediately available in some of the areas, Mr. Kofash said his firm, Jordan Tourism Village Company, could easily arrange these facilities on its own.

"We have built our own access road to the tourism village," said Mr. Kofash. "We are ready to bring in our own generator for power and make own arrangements for water."

"If the delay in approving the projects continues, then there will be perhaps one hotel and restaurant in the

area after three years," he told the Jordan Times sarcastically.

A representative from a local consulting company, Hani Haki, which conducted a study on developing the Dead Sea shore in partnership with a French firm, also addressed the meeting, outlining perceptions of development projects and the related advantages and disadvantages.

Mr. Haki said it was a mistaken view that the western (Israeli) shore of the Dead Sea was well developed and offered the best of services to tourists, who mostly flock there for therapeutic treatment.

Israeli hotels are located two kilometres from the sea shore and people have difficulty getting to the beachfront from the hotels, he said.

Access roads are not good, and Israel does not have enough hotel rooms either, he said.

"On a scale of 10," in terms of proper facilities, "Jordan may have nine points and Israel has three," according to the consultant.

Not many of the audience

agreed with this view.

They said in private that Israeli facilities were indeed better developed and organised than Jordanian facilities.

Another potential investor, who did not want to be identified, criticised the authorities for "complicating the process" by asking for details that could not be provided until after projects are implemented.

Furthermore, demands for a deposit of five percent of the project cost and a "letter of comfort" from a bank simply did not make sense because the actual cost of the land — an essential component of the project cost — has not been determined, noted the investor.

Another point of criticism was why the Jordan Valley Authority is handling the issue rather than the Ministry of Tourism.

"The Ministry of Tourism has a better sense of what it takes to develop tourism and related infrastructure," said the investor. "We fail to see where the Jordan Valley Authority comes in."

WHAT'S GOING ON

FUHEIS FESTIVAL

* Concert by Wadi' Al Safi at the main theatre at 9:00 p.m.

* Several exhibitions on Jordan's tourism sector, Karak, the late Jordanian Prime Minister, Wasfi Tal, Al Ra'i Arabic daily's 25th anniversary, Germany's struggle against fascism, Orthodox churches, abstract and children's art.

FILM

* "Pella in Jordan" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:30 p.m. (Film will be followed by a commentary by Dr. Pam Watson.

PLAY

* "The Maids" (written by Jean Genet) starring Majid Al Qasas

and Najwa Kondakji at the Royal Cultural Centre, Main Theatre at 8:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Abstract art by Fadwa Al Nabulsi at the Royal Cultural Centre.

* Paintings by "Pioneers of the Fifties" Isma'il and Suzanne Al Sheikhly, Khalid Qassab, and Dr. Nuri Behjet at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Utheina.

* "Exhibition of Chinese Products '95," at Al Bassam Hall, King Abdullah Gardens.

* Exhibition demonstrating the developments of cinema over the past century at the French Cultural Centre.

JWA announces annual literary contest

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Writers' Association (JWA) announced its fifth annual literary competition which will accept literary entries from individuals until the end of the year.

The competition, designed to discover talented writers 18 years old and over, is open to Jordanians only.

Applicants are invited to submit their plays, short stories, poetry, children's literature, and novels in Arabic.

According to association spokesperson Basal Rafae'ah, works are not limited in length, "because it is difficult to limit creativity." Mr. Rafae'ah said that not even short stories will be required to have a limit.

The works will be judged by a secret committee of five people, who are also members of the association, Mr. Rafae'ah said.

Mr. Rafae'ah added that he personally oversees the publication of the works of the three winners of the contest in the weekly cultural section of Al Ra'i Arabic daily. Winning does not mean

automatic membership in the association, according to Mr. Rafae'ah, but the winners will remain "in touch" with the administrative committee in the association to allow them the opportunity to participate in seminars held locally and abroad.

The grand prize winner will receive JD 100, second prize is JD 50, and third prize is a collection of association books.

The prize money is symbolic, Mr. Rafae'ah said, adding that the winner gets the benefit of being judged a writer by the most prominent cultural institution in the country.

In 1993, according to Mr. Rafae'ah, Jordanian writer Mufleh Adwan won first prize in this competition and went on to win the Mahmoud Taymour prize organised by the Higher Council for Culture in Egypt.

The number of participants for this year's event is expected to be between 200-300 competitors, half of whom are women, Mr. Rafae'ah added.

4 international firms show interest in oil exploration

AMMAN (J.T.) — Four international oil companies have said they are interested in studying the prospect of entering into oil exploration projects in Jordan, the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) Director General Fakhri Daghestani Sunday said.

Dr. Daghestani declined to reveal the names of the four companies but said that his department was hoping to start negotiations on a production sharing agreement with at least one of these companies before the end of the year.

Minister of Energy and

Mineral Resources Samih Darwazah said in April that Jordan was ready to offer attractive terms to foreign companies interested in exploring for oil in the Kingdom.

In his statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Sunday Dr. Daghestani said that the NRA has already signed a memorandum of understanding with Petronas, a government-owned Malaysian company, to conduct joint studies with the NRA in several regions in the northern parts of the country on the feasibility of prospecting for oil in those

area. He said that the NRA also received a bid from another international company seeking to conduct natural gas exploration studies again in northern Jordan.

Dr. Daghestani said that the average cost of such geological studies is \$500,000. The arrangements that Jordan would be seeking would stipulate that the company conducting the study would bear the costs, he said.

He added that no final agreement on oil prospecting can be reached without approval from the Council of Ministers.

Lebanon seeks more trade with Jordan

BEIRUT (Petra) — Lebanese Minister of Economy and Trade Yassin Jubayr Sunday described his country's trade exchanges with Jordan as progressing well and stressed that Lebanon was seeking economic integration with Jordan and Syria.

The Lebanese minister said that Lebanon was trying to promote trade exchanges with Jordan and adjust the balance of trade with the Kingdom which is currently in favour of Jordan. According to 1994 statistics, the minister said, Jordan sold Lebanon products worth

\$28.2 million while Lebanon bought \$22.85 million in Jordanian goods.

Mr. Jubayr said that Lebanon was seeking to arrange a Jordanian-Lebanese meeting at ministerial levels to discuss means of encouraging economic cooperation.

Taiwan shows off air power as thousands demand reunification

TAIPEI (Agencies) — Taiwan showed off its air force Sunday in a bid to boost public confidence amid right-wing protests and a newspaper report that China is planning a third military drill of the kind that prompted the current crisis.

Thousands of right-wing protesters marched through the capital demanding reunification with the mainland from which the island split in 1949. Some called for President Lee Teng-hui to resign.

Just days after China announced a second round of missile drills set for this week off Taiwan's north coast, the Taiwan military made sure its celebrations of Air Force Day, which falls Aug. 14, were widely broadcast on TV and radio.

Some 50,000 civilians gathered at the Chingchuankang air base in the central city of Taichung to witness demonstrations of battle tactics and flying stunts and inspect hardware, the air force headquarters said.

"Like the government's investment rescue package, to boost the plunging stock market, the air show was more or less intended to increase public confidence," said Hu Fu, professor of political science at National Taiwan University.

On Thursday, China announced it would follow its week-long drills in July with a series of missile tests from Aug. 15-25 off Taiwan, sending

the local stock exchange into free fall.

As the stock market index dropped more than 200 points Friday, the government announced a string of measures to channel money into the bourse to stabilize it.

On Sunday, the United Evening News, quoting an unnamed official, said China would hold a third round of military manoeuvres next month.

The official, a member of the Mainland Affairs Council which sets policy towards China, did not say whether the new drill would involve missiles or give exact dates.

But he noted that the council had accurately predicted the second round of missile tests before China announced it Thursday.

The council believes both the officially-announced missile drills are aimed at ruining President Lee's chances of reelection in elections scheduled for next March.

"The Chinese communists do not want Lee to be reelected next year because they think Lee is leading the pro-independence trend in Taiwan," said Mr. Hu.

He said that by beefing up its military presence and shaking the stock exchange in the hope that business people and other locals here will put pressure on Mr. Lee.

That effect was apparently felt Sunday as the thousands of anti-independence supporters marched down Taipei's

streets, among them former prime minister Hau Pei-tsun and former parliamentary speaker Liang Su-jung, both members of Mr. Lee's ruling Kuomintang party.

Mr. Hau is the party's vice-chairman and Mr. Liang is a presidential advisor. The party is due to nominate its presidential candidate at the end of this month.

Police estimated the number of protesters as 7,000, but organisers claimed they had 50,000 people on the streets.

"Lee Teng-hui is the source of chaos in Taiwan," said Feng Hu-hsiang, executive secretary of the Alliance for Democratic Reform, one of the protest organisers.

"Because of his pro-independence stance, the Chinese communists have stepped up their missile threats against Taiwan," Mr. Feng said.

China blasts U.S.

In another development, Chinese President Jiang Zemin attacked the United States saying Washington was to blame for strained bilateral ties and said Beijing would not stop nuclear testing, a Japanese daily reported on Sunday.

In an interview with the Asahi Shimbun, Mr. Jiang said that the "full blame (for deteriorating ties) lay with the United States."

Ties with Washington have

been seriously strained over the Taiwanese President's visit to the United States in June and China's detention of U.S. human rights activist Harry Wu.

Beijing has sharply criticised Washington for allowing Mr. Lee's private trip, claiming it was a violation of U.S. policy to only recognise one China. Washington has reaffirmed its one-China policy in a bid to reassure Beijing.

China resumed nuclear testing May 15 provoking worldwide protests. Japan and other nations have been closely watching whether Beijing planned to conduct more tests.

Mr. Jiang said that China did not plan to stop tests until a global treaty banning nuclear blasts goes into effect.

The Asahi Shimbun quoted the Chinese leader as saying Beijing "will stop (nuclear tests) after the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) goes into effect."

The CTBT is now being negotiated for possible conclusion in 1996.

Mr. Jiang told the Japanese daily China's nuclear tests are not targeted at, or meant to threaten, any country.

He also said that China would not renounce the use of force against Taiwan, claiming that such a pledge would prevent the island's peaceful reunification with the mainland.



Rioters in Londonderry hurl bottles at the police after disturbances erupted over an Apprentice Boys parade Saturday (AFP photo)

Seoul resumes rice aid to N. Korea after release of ship

SEOUL (Agencies) — South Korea resumed rice shipments to the rival North on Sunday after Pyongyang released a Southern rice-aid ship and its crew following three days of talks in Beijing.

South Korean officials said. Officials from the two countries were also meeting to set a schedule for a new round of rice talks which when first held last June marked the first official bilateral contact since the death of the North's leader Kim Il-Sung in July 1994.

"The two sides are meeting to set a date for the third round of rice talks. We hope to resume contact with the North," said an official at the Unification Ministry here.

He said Kim Hyung-Ki, assistant minister for information and analysis, would remain in Beijing for a few more days.

The Stalinist North released the 9,400-tonne ship and its 21 crew on Sunday morning after Mr. Kim reached an agreement with the North late on Saturday.

The ministry spokesman said the Samsun Venus would reach the southeastern port of Pohang around 3 p.m. (0600 GMT) on Monday.

After the release was made, South Korea resumed rice shipments to the North which were halted because of the incident.

The 11,365-tonne freighter and its 21-member crew were

expected to arrive at North Korea's Nampo Port on Tuesday, said an official at the Korea Maritime and Port Authority.

The Samsun Venus was held by the North after Pyongyang said a sailor, Lee Yang-Chon, took photographs of Chongjin Port, where the ship had docked to unload 5,000 tonnes of free rice.

South Korea expressed regret over the incident and assured the North it would not happen again. Seoul also agreed to resume rice aid to the North as earlier scheduled.

Under an accord signed in Beijing last June, South Korea is supplying 150,000 tonnes of free rice to the North to ease what Seoul says is a chronic food shortage and to improve ties. Half has been shipped to the North already.

A third round of talks had been scheduled for last Thursday but the North abruptly cancelled the talks one day before because of the incident.

The Unification Ministry official told Reuters the third round of talks was unlikely to focus on the rice issue.

Instead the talks would cover the release of another trawler and its eight-man crew, seized by a North Korean patrol boat off the west coast of the peninsula in

May, he said.

South Korea will also ask for the release of a Southern pastor, An Seung-Yoon, who had been on missionary duty in China before being taken to the North against his will. Pyongyang says Pastor An defected.

At the talks, the North was expected to protest against Seoul's arrest of the widow of a leading dissident for an unauthorised trip to the communist North.

"Then the North will bring up the subject of Park Yong-Gil," the ministry official said.

Ms. Park is widow of Moon Ik-Hwan, one of the South's best known dissidents.

Pyeongyang has warned if South Korea prosecuted Ms. Park, it would have an irrevocable effect on relations between the two Koreas, still technically at war since their 1950-53 conflict.

Seoul officials hope the rice talks would lead to regular high-level talks to discuss detente on the divided Korean Peninsula.

Demonstrations in Seoul

Riot police launched a massive tear gas attack Sunday on some 2,000 radicals who occupied the streets of central Seoul to demand the indictment of two former South Korean presidents involved in a 1979 coup.

Mahathir: West more corrupt than Asia

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has strongly criticised an American news report listing Malaysia, China, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines among the most corrupt Asian nations, it was reported Saturday.

"They (in the West) only see other people as corrupt. But if they were to look in the mirror they will see they are more dirty," the Star daily quoted Mr. Mahathir as saying.

Mr. Mahathir, who has been a strong critic of the West since he became prime minister in 1981, was quoted as saying Westerners are racial supremacists who can only perceive non-Western governments as corrupt.

He spoke Friday in Pedu, 350 kilometres northwest of Kuala Lumpur in response to reporters' questions about recent Fortune magazine report headed "Asia-corrupt-o-metre."

The magazine rated corruption in Asia on a 1-10 scale, placing China and Indonesia at the top with 7.31, followed by India at 7.1, the Philippines at 6.59, Thailand with 5.88 Malaysia with 4.64.

Tension mounts in run-up to IRA ceasefire anniversary

BELFAST (AFP) — Tension mounted in Northern Ireland Sunday following the worst weekend of violence in nearly a year and as the anniversary of the Irish Republican Army's ceasefire approached.

About 30 people were injured Saturday in clashes that broke out as the Loyalist marching season started in Belfast and in Londonderry. Some of the marches went through or near Catholic districts, which the nationalist community saw as a "provocation."

On several occasions, leaders of Sinn Fein — the political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) — asked the march organisers and the police not to allow marchers to pass through areas where it was clear they would not be welcome.

The worst clashes took place Saturday on the Ormeau Road in Belfast, where police fired plastic bullets at Catholic protesters throwing bottles, bricks and stones at them. Ten demonstrators and 12 police officers were injured.

The violence broke out as police tried to clear a way for 30 Loyalist marchers to pass through the Catholic district. The march finally went ahead.

In Londonderry, Protestant marchers passed off peacefully during the day,

despite a sitdown protest by Catholic demonstrators.

But police said that in the evening, youths from the Catholic district of Bogside clashed with officers, causing "a few" injuries.

The violence comes less than three weeks before the first anniversary of the IRA ceasefire which helped launch the peace process in Northern Ireland.

After Saturday's unrest in Belfast, Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams accused London of having strangled the peace process, which he said could only make the situation worse.

He announced a peaceful demonstration Sunday in protest at Saturday's police action.

"It is the British government policy which determined the violent outcome of this morning's events," he said in a statement, accusing London of "strangling the peace process."

He added: "London cannot divorce itself from the sectarian policy decisions of the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary, the local police force) and by its failure to engage in the peace process it is encouraging the intransigent and triumphalist behaviour of the Unionist."

Sinn Fein denounced the government for dragging its feet over the peace process by refusing to organise multi-

party talks on the future of the province as soon as possible.

But the British government has rejected this option until the IRA makes concrete moves towards disarmament, a precondition rejected by Republican leaders who enjoy the support of Albert Reynolds, the former prime minister of Ireland.

As Irish premier, he signed the Anglo-Irish peace agreement with British Prime Minister John Major in Ulster in December 1993 — a crucial stage in the peace process.

Mr. Reynolds said the question of IRA disarmament had not been discussed before that agreement had been signed, and if it had been, he would not have signed.

For their part, the Protestant community takes the weekend's violence as a sign that the IRA is on the point of gradually returning to violence.

They fear that contrary to the statements of republican leaders, the Republican and Catholic community is not ready to recognise their rights.

Unionist member of parliament and pastor William McCrea said the nationalists' opposition to the Protestant marches proved, "they have no intention of awarding parity of esteem to Unionists."

Grouse shortage hits 'Glorious Twelfth'

LONDON (AFP) — Britain's much touted grouse-hunting season got underway on Saturday, but shoots from several parts of the country reported disappointingly small numbers of birds offering themselves as targets.

The "Glorious Twelfth" of August, which has been the official date for the start of the season ever since 1773, also saw the now-traditional clashes between hunters and animal rights protesters. In one of the worst incidents, on Stang Hope Moor in the county of North Yorkshire, nine people were arrested after a fight between would-be hunters and members of the League Against Cruel Sports, a hunt official said.

"I heard that scuffles broke out as a shooting party was moving from one moor to the next," she said. She added that the hunt in the region had been "very good... There have been plenty of grouse."

The picture was different in several other regions, however. The shoot in Wales was reported to be disappointing, and figures were also expected to be low in southern England. Hunting at many of the country's 450 sites did not in fact start at all, as officials had decided to delay the start of the season due to the lack of birds. Overall numbers of grouse have been declining in recent years, due to a series of harsh springs, and the appearance of parasites. Unlike its cousin the pheasant, another hunters' favourite, the grouse cannot be reared in captivity.

Chilean cooks bake 25-tonne cake

CURICO, Chile (R) — After two days baking, 10,000 eggs and nine tonnes of flour, Chilean cooks finished on Saturday what they claimed was the world's largest cake. Assembled on a gymnasium floor, the round cake weighed 25 tonnes, measured 30 feet (10 metres) across and had a mixture of flavours including coconut, orange and honey. Organisers of the project, financed by a local supermarket chain, said they would seek certification from the Guinness Book of World Records to get their cake into the book's next edition.

Cooks in this southern Chilean town made the giant pastry in local bakeries during round-the-clock shifts. After finishing it early on Saturday, they photographed the cake and then invited locals to dig in and enjoy their creation.

Italian men cringe when exposed to naked reality

ROME (AP) — When is it rude to shoot a nude? For Italian men, it seems the line is crossed when the camera turns in their direction. A peculiar ruckus has flared in the Italian media after the Paparazzi Pack decided to become man hunters. Shots of male politicians and performers caught with their pants down have led to highly earnest discussions about privacy and propriety in a country where surreptitious photos of naked women are a summertime fixture in the press. Author Umberto Eco skewered the "serious media" for running the photos of naked male celebrities. "They are like moralists who are surprised in a bordello and say they are there just to view the low life of the world," he wrote in the latest issue of L'Espresso, which did not share Eco's distress.

In the same issue, it reprinted a shot of a political party leader, Pierferdinando Casini, naked and drying himself with a towel aboard a yacht. "I want to see all the paparazzi in the cemetery," said television game show host Alberto Castagna, who was photographed changing into his bathing suit. Other uncovered subjects include: Actor Roberto Benigni urinating behind a bush, Premier Lamberto Dini walking in the woods without a shirt, bulky conservative political adviser Giuliano Ferrara sunning on a boat deck in skimpy shorts. Most of the photos have first appeared in Italy's clique of chatty celebrity-driven magazines. But many have been reprinted in newspapers and news magazines — to the satisfaction of some women demused at the role reversal.

"For the first time it's men," said actress Eleonora Giorgi. "For them it's a new thing and they are upset because they feel less powerful being shown nude."

U.S. presidential candidates court Ross Perot's followers

DALLAS (R) — A parade of U.S. presidential candidates on Saturday portrayed themselves as soldiers in Ross Perot's battle against the political status quo, assuring Mr. Perot's followers they had the power to make significant change.

"Our time is coming, our time is coming," shouted Republican political commentator Pat Buchanan, who was also a candidate in 1992. "I can't do it without you. I need your help. We will take back Washington, D.C., and we will take back America for the things we believe in."

"Go Pat go," chanted the audience of roughly 5,000 members of Mr. Perot's United We Stand America (UWSA) political organisation.

Former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander, another Republican presidential candidate, said he accepted Mr. Perot's invitation to address the three-day convention in Dallas "because the revolution has gotten stuck."

"We should end Washington's involvement in welfare," Mr. Alexander said. "That's how the revolution



Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole (left) and wife Elizabeth react as United We Stand America founder Ross Perot comments on Mr. Dole's speech (AFP photo)

gets unstuck."

"We've got a lot of problems," he said. "But we have more opportunity to change them than any other country in the world."

The crowd of mostly white, over-50 Perot supporters came to Dallas from all 50 states at their own expense to push for government change.

"I do not care so much

about who runs for president," said Ken Ogle, a UWSA member from Dallas. "But I want the budget balanced by 2002, the welfare corrected, term limits on officeholders and restructuring the tax code."

"I do not want to hear about who slept with whom or who used what drugs in

college," Mr. Ogle said. "I just want to get the country back on track."

Mr. Perot, a Texas billionaire who bankrolled his own independent presidential bid in 1992, said his goal for the conference was to educate voters so that they "cannot be manipulated" by campaign spin tactics.

Former tobacco lobbyist warns against teen smoking

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton renewed his campaign against teen smoking in the United States on Saturday, introducing a former cigarette company executive who told a national radio audience: "In my lungs and throat where the smoke used to be, there is a cancer that is killing me."

Victor Crawford, a former tobacco industry lobbyist now employed by the American Cancer Society, bolstered Mr. Clinton's argument that the industry uses advertising to create the kind of glamorous images and peer pressure that lure youngsters to cigarettes.

"Kids, cigarettes are bad for you and they are killers," Mr. Crawford said.

Mr. Crawford, 63, was a lobbyist for about five years in the late 1980s for the Tobacco Institute, the industry's voice at the Capitol. He also is a former Maryland state senator.

"I was part of a well organised campaign that depends on young people like you to

think smoking is OK," he said. "We used any marketing trick to make you want to smoke."

Mr. Crawford said the tobacco campaign manipulated young people to pressure their peers to smoke. "We did it all through advertising," he said.

He said he started smoking at age 13.

"Now in my lungs and my throat where the smoke used to be there is a cancer that is killing me," he said in a gravelly voice. "Don't smoke."

Mr. Clinton said he announced his anti-cigarette campaign this week because "we must act sternly and boldly to affirm our moral obligation."

He said advertising aimed at young people creates millions of new smokers, one third of whom will die of cancer and other smoking-related diseases. He said young people are "victims of billions of dollars of advertising campaigns designed by psychologists."

"Some one has to stop this; that's why I decided to act," Mr. Clinton said.

His plan would ban cigarette vending machines, making cigarettes available only over the counter. It would forbid cigarette companies from sponsoring sporting events and advertising their brands on sportswear. It would call for cigarette ads in magazines with a large teen readership to be printed only in black-and-white without the glamorous and sexy symbols intended to appeal to teen-agers.

Cigarette companies also would be required to provide a \$150 million fund to be used to discourage youths from smoking.

Mr. Clinton noted that cigarette makers have said they don't want to encourage teens to smoke, but questioned why they went to court to block his proposals.

"My duty is to protect the health of our children, and I won't back down," the president said.

European beating over n

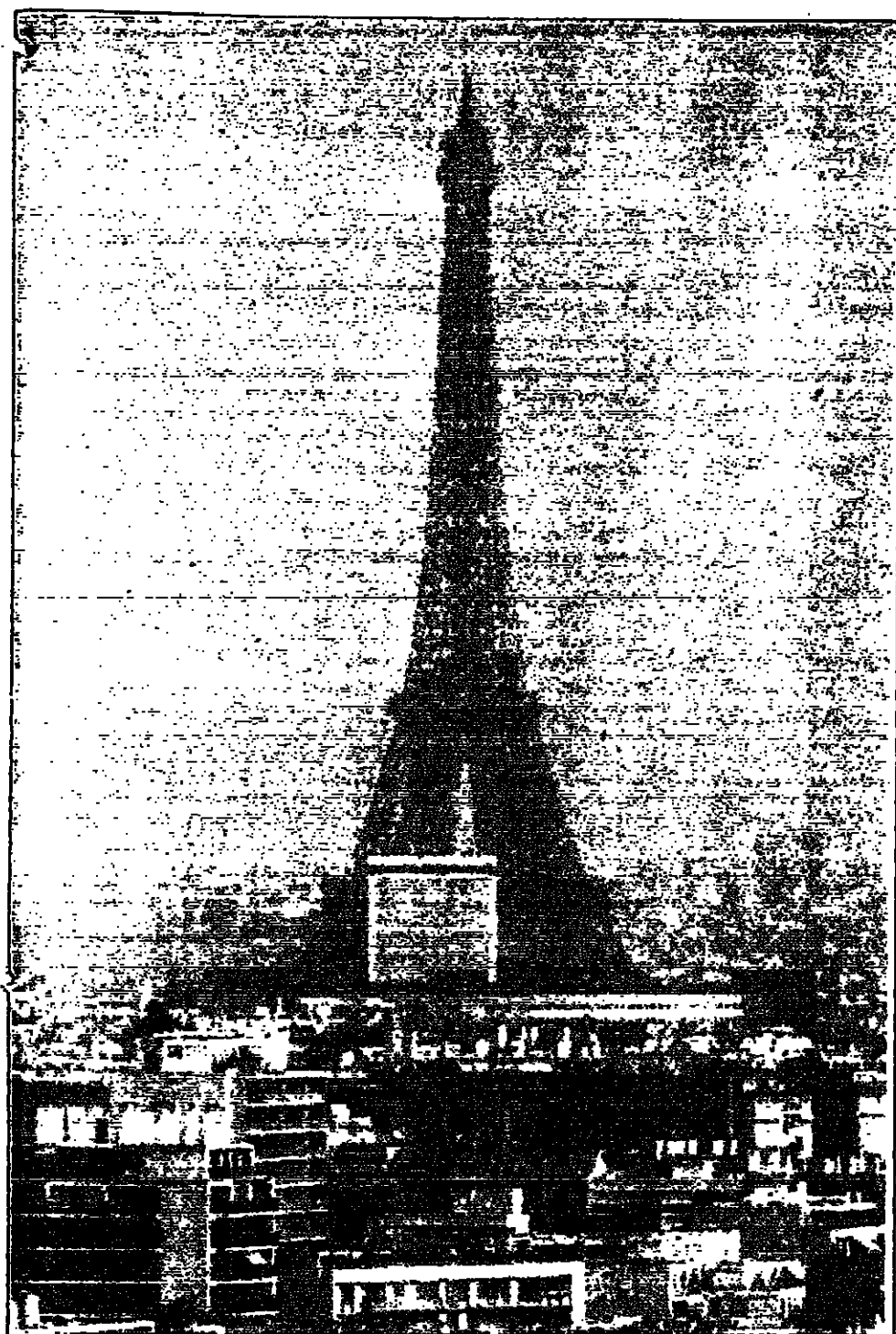
PARIS (AP) — Denmark Royal Theatre cancelled a tour set for next month and Spanish demonstrators heckled two French ships Saturday to pressure France's plans to resume nuclear tests.

It was the latest in a series of protests against the resumption of underground nuclear tests on French Polynesia in the South Pacific before signing a permanent test ban next year.

A growing number of countries have stepped up protests, hoping to force France to scrap its plans to conduct eight more tests.

The director of the Danish Theatre, Michael Madsen, said Saturday he applied the tour of opera and ballet events after consulting with the Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen. The Danish premiere of the opera "The Barber of Seville" in Copenhagen to Paris earlier this month to protest France's test plans.

"It was no longer possible to continue to try to dif-



POLLUTION ALERT: The Eiffel Tower basks in atmospheric pollution at mid-day Saturday. Automobile emissions reacting with high temperatures and strong sunlight for several weeks again pushed the level of ozone into the danger zone, and a "Level-2" alert was broadcast for the capital region by authorities (AFP photo)

Russia gets tough in Chechen peace talks 'Chechens foil attempt to assassinate Dudayev'

GROZNY (R) — Two Russian ministers joined peace talks in a breakaway Chechenya Sunday, threatening to take a tough line with the rebels who they accused of ignoring a military deal. Chechen rebels alleged they had foiled an attempt to assassinate separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, saying the Russians were trying to upset the peace process.

Interior Minister Anatoly Kulikov flew to the southern region Saturday to help Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhailov and other Russian delegates push forward implementation of a military deal reached two weeks ago.

The Russian side intends to take a tough position, because the fulfilment of the agreement by supporters of rebel leader Dzhokhar

Dudayev is so far negligible," Mr. Mikhailov said on his way into talks in the regional capital Grozny.

The deal, meant to provide for the disarmament of the rebels in return for a partial withdrawal of Russian forces sent to Chechenya in December, has so far had little practical effect.

Chechen rebels, pushed to the mountains of southern Russia in six months of fighting, have treated it as a victory while largely refusing to give up their arms.

Taking advantage of a shaky ceasefire, they now ride past Russian checkpoints on the lowlands of the tiny region, cocking a snook at frustrated troops.

In what appeared to be more an attempt to appease that frustration than a real

threat to restart the conflict, Mr. Kulikov said the rebels would have to disarm.

"If the Chechen side insists that the regular army of the republic does not disarm, we will unilaterally continue to disarm Mr. Dudayev's illegal armed formations by force," he told ITAR-TASS agency Saturday evening.

Chechen rebels alleged they had foiled an attempt to assassinate their president, who unilaterally declared Chechenya independent in 1991 and is now on the run from the Russians in the mountains of the north Caucasus region.

Hamad Kurbanov, who says he is Mr. Dudayev's personal representative in the Russian Federation, told reporters his Japanese jeep had been loaded with a huge re-

mote control bomb in anticipation of an upcoming meeting with the rebel leader.

Chechen fighters showed reporters the dark blue vehicle. Under each of the seats were what appeared to be plastic-type explosives with wires sticking out.

They also showed electrical devices which they say would have enabled Russian special service agents to track the vehicle from a helicopter and detonate it upon demand.

"They were counting on me to go to meet the president in this car," Mr. Kurbanov said. "This was obviously an attempt on the president of the Chechen republic of Dzhokhar Dudayev. It is state terrorism on the part of Russia right at the time when the peace talks are going on."

He said the vehicle was

confiscated Aug. 4 by Russian military officials at a checkpoint in Roshni-Chu, 60 kilometres southwest of Grozny, as he travelled to peace talks in the Chechen capital.

Three days later, he said, it was returned to him by Russian officials outside the mission of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) where the talks are held.

"We had information through our secret service that the vehicle was loaded with explosive equipment. It was also obvious from the fact that wherever I drove it, helicopters followed behind me," said Mr. Kurbanov.

Russian delegates to the talks in Grozny were not immediately available for comment on the allegations.

Murayama: Letter to Major was no apology

TOKYO (R) — A row over Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama's feelings about Japan's World War II actions came full circle on Sunday when officials revealed he used the word "apology" in a letter to British Prime Minister John Major.

After a weekend of high emotion on the issue, the Japanese foreign ministry broke with tradition because of the furore and said publicly for the first time that the private letter to Mr. Major did include the word "apology."

"We normally do not disclose what is in a private letter," a foreign ministry official said.

The dispute, only two days before the 50th anniversary of Japan's World War II surrender, flared when the Japanese leader said Satur-

day the letter he sent to Mr. Major was sent in Japanese, accompanied by an English translation.

The comment set off anger and confusion among British war veterans who had already been dismissive of reports that the letter expressed only "remorse and regret" for the treatment of prisoners of war.

While debate raged in Britain about what Mr. Murayama's letter meant, the issue passed with little controversy in the Japanese media which gave only brief reports on the fact that Mr. Murayama had written to Mr. Major and mentioned the war.

A foreign ministry official said the letter to Mr. Major, primarily intended to congratulate the British prime minister on his election as

leader of the Conservative Party, was sent in Japanese, accompanied by an English translation.

"The translation included the word 'apology' to express Japan's feelings," the official told Reuters.

"The true meaning of the prime minister's comments has failed to be properly communicated," the official added.

A spokeswoman for Mr. Major's office said Friday that the letter expressed Mr. Murayama's "profound remorse for Japan's actions in a certain period of the past which caused such unbearable suffering and sorrow for so many people."

But Mr. Major's Downing Street office, which had hailed the letter as the first official written apology by a Japanese prime minister, was

vague about what it actually meant.

But a spokeswoman added: "The word apology is there."

Mr. Murayama — while acknowledging the letter had expressed profound remorse over Japanese treatment of British and other allied POWs — told reporters that the letter had not been meant as an apology.

"The letter was designed mainly to congratulate the reelection of Mr. Major as chief of the Conservative Party," Mr. Murayama said.

The foreign ministry official said the reference to the war in the letter — which his ministry had helped draft — was a repetition of what Japan's then Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa told Mr. Major when he visited Tokyo in September, 1993.

The official said Mr. Hosokawa expressed "profound remorse and apologies for Japan's action in the past that inflicted deep scars on so many people including prisoners of war."

Mr. Hosokawa was the first Japanese prime minister to clearly describe Japan's role in World War II as "aggressive" and "wrong." Japanese government leaders have used words such as "remorse," "regret" and "reflection," to acknowledge the wrong decisions it made before and during World War II.

But no government leader has ever publicly "apologised" for past misdeeds, an act that would anger right-wing activists as violating the honour of individual soldiers who fought in the war.

Ivorian president says controversial election code to remain in force

ABIDJAN (R) — President Henri Konan Bedie, on a charm offensive in Muslim regions of Ivory Coast ahead of elections starting in October, has said a disputed electoral code is here to stay.

Mr. Bedie ended a trip to mainly Muslim towns in the west on Saturday with a speech denouncing attacks on the code by his rivals, including Muslim ex-Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara.

"The electoral code is simply the strict application of the constitution," Mr. Bedie said in the western town of Mankono.

"The electoral code in force is a case which is closed for the whole nation, a closed case which is in fact an ardent obligation for the citizens of our country," he added.

He did not, however, explicitly rule out minor changes.

State television broadcast Bedie's comments on Saturday after his return to the business capital Abidjan.

The outgoing parliament, where Mr. Bedie's Democratic Party has an overwhelming

majority, approved the code in December.

Critics say it was conceived to stop Mr. Ouattara standing.

Mr. Ouattara himself describes the code as "iniquitous" and says it rules him out of the Oct. 22 presidential election.

A Washington-based deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), he lost a brief tussle with Mr. Bedie to succeed veteran President Felix Houphouet-Boigny.

Mr. Bedie, national assembly speaker when Mr. Houphouet-Boigny died in 1993, took over under the terms of the constitution.

Mr. Bedie, who will be formally chosen as his party's candidate in two weeks, is anxious to become elected president.

If Mr. Ouattara does not stand, his main rival will be veteran opposition politician Laurent Abagbo of the left-leaning Ivorian Popular Front (FPI), who lost to Mr. Houphouet-Boigny in 1990 in the country's first multi-party

presidential election. Mr. Bedie support groups have mushroomed across the country. State television regularly features reports on them.

Mr. Bedie himself has been touring Ivory Coast explaining his government's policies, outlining benefits for the country and individual regions and pledging to look at grievances.

He has repeatedly stressed the need for social harmony if the country is to enjoy the fruits of an economic recovery taking shape after the January 1994 devaluation of the CFA franc used in much of Francophone Africa.

Ivory Coast, which is slipping into recession in the late 1990s, predicts growth of over six per cent in 1995.

In Mankono on Saturday, Mr. Bedie said the electoral code had been thoroughly debated and democratically approved and urged his listeners to resist or ignore what he called the "intellectually dishonest" campaign against it.

Mr. Ouattara, who returned to Ivory Coast on Thursday for a holiday, is under intense pressure to stand for president.

The Rally of the Republicans (RDR), a centrist splinter group from Mr. Bedie's party, has named him as its candidate.

He says he is willing to stand but that the code's requirement of five years continuous residence before an election prevents him. He says he is not prepared to break the law, adding that he can stand only if the code is amended.

The code has split the Muslim community, who make up about 10 per cent of the population of over 13 million. Some groups have denounced it, others have rallied to the government.

Critics also oppose its nationality clauses. Candidates must be Ivorian by birth of Ivorian parents. They also demand an independent electoral commission to run the elections.

55 neo-Nazis jailed for a week

BERLIN (AP) — A judge ordered 55 neo-Nazis jailed for one week after police foiled the skinheads' attempts to mark the eighth anniversary of the death of Hitler deputy Rudolf Hess, authorities said Sunday.

The neo-Nazi youths were rounded up by police as they tried to converge Saturday on a former East German army training ground in Frankfurt, 160 kilometres south of Berlin, for a banned rally.

A loudspeaker system, tables and benches had already been set up and police said they confiscated a large amount of alcohol.

In an unusually harsh move, a judge in nearby Chemnitz placed 55 neo-Nazis in preventive detention until Aug. 21 — when the so-called "Rudolf Hess action week" ends, said police shift supervisor Hans-Ulrich Boehme. In all, 73 neo-Nazis were arrested Saturday.

Mr. Hess hanged himself in a Berlin prison Aug. 17, 1987 at age 69. His family claims he was murdered and his death has inspired a cult among neo-Nazi youth.

On the anniversary of Mr. Hess' death, German neo-Nazis traditionally play cat-and-mouse games with police as authorities attempt to foil rights' efforts to hold rallies across the country.

More sophisticated extremists use cellular phones and computer bulletin board systems to organise.

During Hess action week last year, neo-Nazis crossed the border into Luxembourg and rallied outside the German embassy, where about 100 were arrested and deported.

After a tip from German rail on Saturday, Chemnitz police said they arrested skinheads between the ages of 15 and 28 at area train stations, on rail cars and at the former Frankenberg training site itself.

They said the neo-Nazis offered no resistance.

The skinheads were all from the eastern state of Saxony — from Dresden, Bautzen and Chemnitz — and a large number of them have a history of criminal activity ranging from assault to displaying illegal Nazi symbols, police said.

A Saxony law, strict in comparison to most other German states, allows police to keep people in preventive detention for up to two weeks.

India's Rao plans another reshuffle to close ranks

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao is likely to reshuffle his cabinet in coming weeks to try to patch up his fractured Congress Party before next year's polls, government officials and analysts said on Sunday.

It would be the third reshuffle this year in a continuing effort by Mr. Rao to keep rebellious party cadres in line.

But Mr. Rao's options appear to have narrowed, with some senior party leaders virtually defying his authority, they said.

Home (interior) Minister Shankarrao Chavan, a confidant of Mr. Rao, has irked Congress members by attending a birthday celebration in his honour thrown by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its ally Shiv Sena in Bombay.

At least four cabinet ministers complained publicly that Mr. Chavan mixed with right-wing Hindu parties which are itching to throw Congress out of power and are considered antagonistic towards Muslims, a traditional Congress vote bank.

"Chavan should not have gone to attend the function. It has greatly damaged the party," Rajesh Pilot, second in command at the home ministry, told the Asian Age newspaper.

The newspaper said nearly 50 Congress lawmakers had

signed a note addressed to Mr. Rao demanding Mr. Chavan be called to task.

Railways Minister C.K. Jaffer Sharief this month scoffed at efforts by Mr. Rao to draft senior leaders for party work ahead of general elections to be held by next June, saying the party was bound to lose Muslim votes if he was dropped from the cabinet.

"Rao's options are very limited now, the reason being within his own party a serious faction has developed in which veteran Congress leaders have combined against him," Rai Singh, a political analyst and a former diplomat, told Reuters.

Mr. Singh said Mr. Rao needed to counter the nexus that had developed between Mr. Sharief, Civil Aviation Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad and Sharad Pawar, a powerful leader and Chief Minister of Maharashtra. India's most industrialised state.

"The first option now is to reshuffle the council of ministers and drop Mr. Azad and Mr. Sharief who are openly challenging him," Mr. Singh said, adding that one of Mr. Rao's foremost concerns before elections was to appease minority Muslims.

Government sources said Mr. Rao, under pressure from up-and-coming Congress members, would probably induct new faces into his

cabinet after the four-week monsoon session of parliament, set to end Aug. 25.

Pran Chopra, of the Centre for Policy Research, said any reshuffle would probably be limited in scope.

"I think Rao would like to avoid a large-scale reshuffle although he will keep dangling it before his party," Mr. Chopra said, noting Mr. Rao could lose leverage over party faithful if the reshuffle were so vast as to rule out subsequent tinkering.

Mr. Rao last expanded his cabinet June 10, bringing in only three new ministers and leaving dozens of hopefuls still waiting.

Compounding his woes, Congress rebels want to table a vote of no-confidence against Mr. Rao's government this month.

The rebels are seeking support from opposition parties. The breakaway faction says it has 15 lawmakers from Congress on its side, but it was not clear it would be able to garner the 50 votes needed to force a no-confidence vote.

Indian police last week used batons, water cannons and tear gas to halt a protest march by at least 20,000 supporters of the breakaway faction, injuring at least 50 people including leader N.D. Tiwari who was sent to hospital with high blood pressure after being sprayed by a water cannon.

Police says body of Western hostage found in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India (AP) — A Kashmiri separatist group killed one of its five Western hostages, and his headless body was found Sunday with a note left by the militants, police said.

The body identified as Hans Christian Ostro, 27, of Oslo, Norway, was discovered about 45 kilometres south of the tourist area where the five hostages were kidnapped in July.

"We have killed the hostage because the government has failed to accept our demands," said the note left by the Al Faran militants, which has ordered India to release 15 jailed rebels. India has refused.

Mr. Ostro's remains were found in Seer, a village in the

Anantnag district of Jammu-Kashmir State, police said. United News of India reported that Mr. Ostro's body and severed head were recovered separately at different places. No further information was immediately released on how the body was found or by whom.

The top police sources told the Associated Press and India's two news agencies that the note didn't mention the four remaining captives: An American, two Britons and a German. The sources all spoke on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Ostro was the first foreign hostage executed by Kashmiri militants since the

separatist uprising began in 1989, although an Israeli was killed in a gunfight when he resisted an abduction attempt in 1992.

His death came as India was preparing plans to hold local elections in Kashmir for the first time in eight years later this year. The latest violence was likely to increase international pressure on India to pursue a political settlement to the Kashmir dispute.

Ram Mohan Rao, a spokesman of the Indian-controlled government in Jammu-Kashmir, refused to comment about the reported killing. He said the federal government may issue a statement later Sunday.

Europeans continue beating up on France over nuclear tests

PARIS (AP) — Denmark's Royal Theatre cancelled a Paris tour set for next month and Spanish demonstrators heckled two French naval ships Saturday to protest France's plans to resume nuclear tests.

It was the latest in a firestorm of opposition to President Jacques Chirac's plans to resume underground nuclear tests on French Polynesia Atolls in the South Pacific before signing a permanent test ban next year.

A growing number of countries have slapped France with economic boycotts, hoping to force it to scrap its plans to conduct seven or eight more blasts.

The director of the Danish Royal Theatre, Michael Mortensen, said Saturday he spiked the tour of opera and ballet events after consulting with the party of Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen. The Danish premier rode a bicycle from Copenhagen to Paris earlier this month to protest France's test plans.

"It was no longer possible to continue to try to diffe-

rentiate the justified political reactions against the French nuclear tests from the cultural intentions of this tour," Mr. Mortensen said.

In the northwest Spain port of La Corogne, about 200 protesters demonstrated next to two French military vessels docked there, police sources said. That demonstration was organised by several environmental groups.

The protesters said in a statement that they feared new nuclear tests could destabilise the Atolls, "which already contain radioactivity equivalent to many times that which was released during the catastrophe of Chernobyl."

France has been testing nuclear weaponry in the South Pacific for more than 30 years. By far the greatest number of tests came under Mr. Chirac's predecessor, Francois Mitterrand, who authorised 86 explosions during his 14-year term before he announced a moratorium in 1992.

Charles de Gaulle, who brought France into the atomic age in 1960, authorised 30 test explosions.

Zaire fed up with Rwandan refugees

KINSHASA (AFP) — Zaire's growing irritation with the more than one million Rwandan refugees camped in the rich eastern province of Kivu boiled over this week when the authorities here blamed the murder of six Italian tourists on a refugee gang.

The Italians, including two children of six and 11, were killed Sunday in cold blood in Virunga game park near the refugee camps around Goma, chief town of north Kivu.

A spokesman for the prime minister said those responsible belonged to armed and uniformed gangs which had been operating since the Rwandan Hutus fled into eastern Zaire a year ago.

If more attention had been paid to the likely repercussions on regional security of the prolonged presence of the refugees, such incidents as Sunday's slayings could not have happened, the spokesman said.

There are about 720,000 refugees of the Hutu tribe in the Goma camps and about 350,000 in camps near Bukavu, capital of south Kivu 100 kilometres away.

The "voluntary return" schemes mounted by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees are "at a dead end," a UNHCR official admitted.

In fact, the attempt to get people to return home to Rwanda of their own volition has turned out to be a fiasco, with never more than about 450 a week deciding to move.

Any volunteers for repatriation face fierce intimidation from the Interahamwe, brutish militiamen behind the worst of last year's massacres of the Tutsi minority and Hutu moderates in Rwanda in which at least 500,000 people perished.

The militiamen and remnants of the Hutu-dominated Rwandan armed forces who are in the camps tell people they must wait for the "big return," when the Hutu hard-liners hope to be able to storm back and drive out the Tutsi-led Patriotic Front, the former rebel movement which took power a year ago.

Why the bomb did not win the war

The belief that Hiroshima and Nagasaki was the threat of a prompted Japan's surrender has given the made Japan capitulate atom bomb unique political potency. In fact, it

By Peter Popham

THE END of the war in the Pacific is usually described roughly thus: Japan rejected the Allies' ultimatum at the Potsdam Conference. President Truman decided to drop the bomb. Hiroshima was destroyed, then Nagasaki — whereupon Japan capitulated.

This version of history has become the received wisdom for two reasons. We know everything that is to be known about the horror of those first aggressive nuclear explosions. No events in the Pacific War — nothing else in the whole course of the World War II except perhaps the Holocaust — has received such exhaustive attention. We have in a sense lived in their shadow ever since. If ever in history man has executed terminal acts, taken on the mantle of the gods and hurled thunderbolts, those days in August 50 years ago were the time. Somehow we need to believe that the consequences were correspondingly epic.

The second reason is that, although the decision to drop the bombs was taken swiftly and without much apparent heart-searching, their effects were so ghastly that their use has excited furious argument ever since. At the most extreme it has led to hysterical comparisons between Hiroshima and Auschwitz. America, long to believe that in both Europe and the Pacific it was fighting "the good war," in the final act suddenly found itself recast as principal monster. The only way to rebut such charges was to claim overwhelming necessity and efficacy. The bombs were dropped. Within eight days Japan surrendered. Therefore the bombs ended the war. Thereby half a million American lives and millions of Japanese lives were saved. The bomb was horrible, but it was worth it.

Nevertheless, the argument has never been clinched. It is a scab that American historians and journalists cannot resist picking, a game they have continually to replay in their heads, to make sure they come out morally on top. As the blurb of a new book on the end of the war puts it: "What would have happened if the atomic bombs

had not been dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the Allies had had to invade Japan to end the war?"

That is a very sly begging of the question. Because the reason there is any dispute about what caused Japan to surrender is that, between the dropping of the two bombs, another momentous event occurred. Hiroshima was bombed on Aug. 6, Nagasaki on the 9th. But on Aug. 8 the Soviet Union, neutral until then, informed Japan that it was declaring war; the next day it invaded Manchuria, China and Korea. Given that none of these developments was welcome, which was it that persuaded Japan to sue for peace?

The destruction of Hiroshima undoubtedly shocked the Japanese authorities. They quickly learnt from Yoshio Nishina, the physicist in charge of Japan's own rather pathetic version of the Manhattan Project, that an atomic device was probably to blame. The Japanese knew how hard it was to obtain the uranium necessary to build a bomb — after two years of trying, Japan's scientists had managed to produce only a wafer of uranium about the size of a postage stamp — and Admiral Toyoda, chief of staff of the imperial navy, believed that the Hiroshima bomb was the only one America possessed. But a rumour swept through Japanese official circles after Hiroshima, based on the imaginative testimony of a downed American pilot, that Kyoto and Tokyo would also suffer nuclear attack within the next few days. When Nagasaki was pulverised, the question arose of who was to get it next.

Kyoto, the old imperial capital, had been completely spared until then, thanks to the lobbying of American Japanophiles in Washington. But in the case of Tokyo, there was nothing much left to hit. The raids of March 9 to 10, 1945, which killed more than 100,000 and left a million homeless, were the most destructive of the whole war, including Hiroshima. Yet the B-29s had continued to return to bombard the capital. Although the bombers were explicitly banned from

targeting the imperial palace, a firestorm started by a raid on May 26 destroyed 27 buildings in the palace complex and killed 28 members of the emperor's staff, while Hirohito, the emperor and his attendants huddled in their shelter 60 feet below ground.

Bombing, even atomic bombing, is subject to the law of diminishing returns. Kyoto would have been a tragic loss though it is doubtful whether at that juncture even the Japanese were in a mood to worry about temples and rock gardens. But the Americans were running out of targets. More than 60 cities and already been burnt. Millions of civilians had been evacuated to the countryside, including all but 200,000 of the population of Tokyo. The economy was at a standstill. The infrastructure was in ruins. No work was being done, nothing was being manufactured. The only thing another bomb could do was kill more people.

The theory that Hiroshima and Nagasaki ended the war rests on the assumption that the Japanese authorities were concerned about the fate of ordinary Japanese people. But if that had been the case, the war would not have been prosecuted in the way it was. After the bombing of Pearl Harbour in December 1941, for example, the Japanese forces stampeded through South-East Asia and the islands of the Pacific, occupying Burma and reaching New Guinea before they were checked. So rapid was their advance that they far outstripped their lines of supply. The result was that, when they encountered Allied resistance, they quickly began to starve. The numerous cases of Japanese soldiers killing and eating Australians, New Guineans and even each other is nothing to do with their bestiality as human beings and everything to do with the bestiality of their supreme commanders in Tokyo.

From early on in the war, Japanese soldiers were called on to make the ultimate sacrifice — to throw away their lives, either through starvation or banzai charges or, later, kamikaze attacks. When, in mid-1944, the war began to reach Japanese



civilians, the expectation was the same. In Saipan, where the Japanese soldiers fought practically to the last man, the civilian population, too, was required to die, most commonly through mass suicides over the cliffs. It was the same story 10 months later in Okinawa. By the end of the war Japan resembled not so much an ordinary nation as a vast, apocalyptic cult. Its members' only goal was to die for the emperor.

Yet those at the heart of the nation, the heart of the cult, retained a certain flinty realism not permitted in their subjects. The people might die in a million gallant ways, but the emperor and his line must live. It was with this in mind, as the war situation became increasingly desperate, that the emperor's closest advisers began casting every more anxious eyes at their mighty neighbour to the West, the Soviet Union.

Russia and Japan's destinies had been intertwined since the dawn of Japan's modern era. As early as

through China, ferocious battles were fought with the Red Army on the Siberian and Mongolian borders, and if the crazier voices in the Japanese army and cabinet had had their way, Japan would have gone to war against Russia soon after Germany did, welching on the Soviet-Japan Neutrality Pact that had been signed in April 1941. At this point, however, some semblance of sanity prevailed, and Japan drew back.

As the war developed "not necessarily to Japan's advantage," in Hirohito's famous phrase, Japan's relationship with the Soviet Union began to assume ever greater significance; its neighbour's neutrality bulked large in the hopes and fears of Japan's rulers. On April 5, 1945 the Soviet Foreign Affairs Commissar, Molotov, informed the Japanese ambassador that once the neutrality pact expired in April 1946, it would not be renewed. Japanese intelligence reported a massive movement of Red Army troops and supplies towards the Manchurian border. A clandestine transmitter began inciting Manchuria's large Russian population to revolt; the Japanese consul general in Harbin told Tokyo that he believed it was part of a campaign to give the Soviets a pretext for invading Manchuria. The Japanese began to worry. (If they had known that Stalin had promised the other Allies he would enter the war against Japan within three months of Germany's defeat, of course, their alarm would have been considerably greater).

In its desperate attempt to keep Russia sweet, Japan launched a manic diplomatic offensive: Offering to give up Manchuria, carve up China, and flood the Soviet Union with raw materials from the lands Japan had conquered (something it was in no position to do). Most bizarrely, on June 14, the former foreign minister Koki Hirota offered the Soviet ambassador, Jacob Malik, the prospect of a Soviet-Japan alliance to increase her naval strength in the future. "And that, together with the Russian army, would make a force unequalled in the world." A proposal more insanely remote from Japan's actual circumstances is hard to imagine, unless it was to offer to cooperate in a moonshot. Malik, who must have had trouble keeping a straight face, said he would study the proposal.

Unsurprisingly, none of Japan's ideas got anywhere. Finally, Molotov agreed to meet the Japanese ambassador on August 8. But Molotov's message was the opposite of what the ambassador had been hoping to hear: The Soviet Union was declaring war. The next day Manchuria, China and Korea were invaded, and it might only be days before it was the turn of Japan's home islands. If that happened, there was little reason to doubt Soviet intentions. Soon there would be a red flag flying over the palace of the supreme Soviet of the Socialist Republic of Japan, and the emperor and his line would be extinct.

With the Russians at one end of the country and the Americans at the other, it was the devil and the deep blue sea — so the deep blue sea bore closer examination, in case it might be possible to swim in it. Late at night on the day of the Soviet advance, a top-level conference a so-called *gozen kaigi*, was held in the presence of the emperor 60 feet under the imperial palace. The chief secretary to the cabinet read the Potsdam Declaration (which had been received 13 days before) aloud. It did not escape notice that whereas previous Allied ultimatums had demanded "unconditional surrender" pure and simple, Potsdam called for "unconditional surrender of all armed forces." It could be a key concession.

To establish whether it was, the Japanese Foreign Ministry cabled the Allied governments that it was ready to accept the declaration, "with the understanding that the said declaration does not compromise... the prerogatives of His Majesty as a Sovereign Ruler."

"Let them keep the son-of-a-bitch!" American GIs in the Pacific yelled, when they heard of the Japanese demand. Keep him they did.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki will go down in history as two of the most cruel and awesome acts of war of the 20th century, but the defining influence they have since had on political and military history is due partly to the erroneous belief that they abruptly ended the war. Yet compared to the threat of invasion by the Soviet Union, their influence on the decision of the Japanese to surrender was marginal. The menace of the nuclear bomb will always be terrifying; but the notion that it has unique political potency turns out to have been a myth all along.

Jordanian option is not yet spelt out

(Continued from page 1)

against Baghdad; he also urged Arab and Western countries to open dialogue with Baghdad to pave the way for involving Iraq in the Middle East peace process.

But with the U.S. unlikely to consider opening a dialogue with Saddam Hussein, Jordan might find itself forced to support someone Washington has shown signs of dealing with, according to analysts.

Even though he denied contacts with the U.S., Gen. Hassan is believed to have in fact met with American officials in Amman. He also told reporters on Saturday that he is keen on mending Iraq's relations with Arabs and all other states to help him lift the sanctions imposed against his country since it invaded Kuwait in 1990.

While admitting that Jordan's move to grant asylum to opponents of President Saddam will help speed up Jordan's reconciliation process with Gulf states, some Jordanian officials claim that Jordanian-Iraqi relations are irrelevant to the Kingdom's quest for improved relations with the Gulf.

But the politicians disagree saying that by turning its back on President Saddam, Jordan would be winning over the Saudis and Kuwaitis more easily and quickly.

News agencies on Sunday reported that a Saudi prince met with King Hussein for talks on the issue of the defection of the

Deputies criticise move

(Continued from page 1)

sovereignty and stability."

Dr. Amoush said any change in Iraq should come from within and "if they were seeking a base let them take the U.S. as the base if what has been said about them having contacts with the Americans before fleeing the country was true."

The Zarqa deputy appeared to suggest that the defection was arranged with the U.S.

Gen. Hassan was "very sure of himself" during Saturday's press conference, Dr. Amoush said. "He knew what he was saying. It was not like someone who is only concerned over the situation in Iraq."

Leftist Deputy Toujan Faisal also said that the Jordanian move will badly influence the country, especially in terms of hosting Iraqi defectors "who have good knowledge of Iraq's secrets."

"Jordan will be responsible not only for ensuring their safety and security but also for protecting the information they have," said Ms. Faisal.

Deputy Faisal warned that other Arab countries will lose confidence in Jordan "that once showed solidarity with Iraq and now turned against it."

Soames arrives in Amman

(Continued from page 1)

out of Kuwait and has been director general of the Saudi armed forces project since 1992.

In a statement issued prior to Mr. Soames' arrival, the British embassy in Amman said Britain will continue to strive for a political and diplomatic solution to the war in former Yugoslavia.

Britain "remains eager to maintain its close and regular contacts (over the situation in the Balkans) with Jordan who is one of the major contributors to the United Nations forces in Croatia," the statement said.

Britain is part of the contact group that was set up by Western nations to negotiate a settlement to the conflict, which has pitted the Serbs against both the Bosnian Muslims and Croats.

The group includes France, Germany, Russia and the United States.

Jordan and other Arab and Muslim countries have voiced concern over the failure of the Western nations to end the atrocities committed by the Serbs against the Muslims of Bosnia. The Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has also castigated the West for failing to end "the crimes against humanity" in Bosnia, warning that it considers the arms embargo on Bosnia invalid.

Britain, along with the Western allies, oppose the lifting of the sanctions on Bosnian Muslims on the grounds that such a move would only lead to the escalation of hostilities in the Balkans.

Jordanian officials have said that the West should either

Israel approves accord

(Continued from page 1)

Police said they could not be certain how Qaissi was killed because his body was taken from the hospital before an autopsy could be conducted.

"It is difficult for us to connect the two things even though on the face of it, it seems reasonable" to connect the shots fired by the settler with Qaissi's death, Natan Kramarsky, deputy head of Israeli police in the West Bank, told army radio.

Police Minister Moshe Sahal said he promised an investigation.

Police appealed to the Palestinians to return the young man's body.

Settlers have been occupying hilltops in the West Bank since last month trying to block self-rule spreading from Jericho and the Gaza Strip where it began in May 1994.

Palestinians until Sunday had done no more than demonstrate against the settlers. Some Palestinians have been angered that troops do not immediately remove settlers from every hill illegally occupied.

he wanted to do while still here instead of fleeing with millions of dollars? That is the way cowards behave."

Prices have soared since the high-level defections.

Traders said a kilo of cooking oil had jumped to 2,500 dinars from 2,000 and a tray of 30 eggs to 3,500 from 2,500. They said flour was in short supply.

The Iraqi dinar has tumbled to new lows against the U.S. dollar, which on Sunday was worth about 2,000 dinars.

Syria to boost olive output by 50%

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria is launching an agricultural plan to increase olive production by around 50 per cent over the next five years, an agriculture ministry official has said.

Hassan Katana, chief of planning, said his ministry was planning to reduce 680,000 tonnes of olives in the year 2000 from 435,000 tonnes in 1995 by expanding the area planted.

Olive plantation was mainly in the hands of the private sector which receives free guidance from the ministry, he said.

He did not disclose the cost of the plan but said the scheme would increase the number of olive trees from 53.7 million to 63 million. The ministry will provide olive saplings at symbolic prices to farmers.

The private sector is allowed to sell its production of olives and olive oil locally. It was allowed to export olive oil in 1993 when a surplus was achieved.

He said the increase would allow Syria, whose citizens are among the biggest olive oil consumers in the world, to boost its exports of olive oil.

Syria became self-sufficient in olive production in 1992 when it produced around 400,000 tonnes. Annual consumption is estimated at about the same amount. In 1993 Syria exported 30,000 tonnes of olive oil.

Syria's production this year dropped to 435,000 tonnes of olives from 510,000 in 1994, Mr. Katana said.

A surplus of 20,000 tonnes of olive oil was ready for export.

World Bank soon to try 'micro loans' to globe's poorest

WASHINGTON (R) — The World Bank, in an initiative that blends business and development, soon will provide funds for "micro-loans" to the world's poorest people, primarily women, officials said Sunday.

The loans, as small as \$100 and made through local lenders, could have a powerful effect in improving income and reducing poverty in the developing world, they said.

"The demand for these loans among women is enormous," said bank vice president Ismail Serageldin, chairman of the Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest (CGAP), created in June to implement the micro-loan strategy.

Donor nations, banks and institutions have pledged \$200 million for the micro-loans. Three-fourths of it will go to institutions that lend mainly to women. About \$30 million has been collected so far. Disbursement will begin in two or three months.

By aiming at the poorest segments of society, a focus on women was inevitable. Mohini Malhotra, administrator of the programme, said in an interview Thursday with Reuters.

"The poorest, landless, most destitute heads of households are women," she said, and they also face many obstacles to gaining credit. Property rights favour men and many times, a man is required to co-sign a loan that goes to a woman.

Nonetheless, poor women have a stellar record in repaying loans. Aid officials also note that women's income goes to activities that promote family welfare, such as education, better diets and health care.

"We see this as a new model" for development programmes, Ms. Malhotra said, by encouraging lenders to reach a segment now often unable to get loans.

"We're really looking at transforming the way financial institutions work," she said, describing the projected as marrying "development and business, charity and sustainability. These aren't tradeoffs."

In several nations, "banks for the poor" already exist but they often are under-financed, which limits their reach.

The CGAP micro-programme will work through institutions such as philanthropies, credit unions

and banks that have a record in lending to the very poor. Mohammad Yunis, president of the Grameen Bank in Pakistan, which works with two million poor borrowers, will chair a panel of expert advisers to CGAP.

"This is the most significant event in the world of micro-finance. This is a beginning to a new future," he said.

In a report on a similar topic, the International Food Policy Research Institute,

based in Washington, said women were "an untapped source of productivity gains" in food output in developing nations.

"If women were given the same resources as men, developing countries would see significant increases in agricultural productivity," the authors of the report, "women: The Key to Food Security," said. They cited lack of access to credit as one of the inhibiting factors.

Low oil prices depress Arab income in 1994

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab oil export earnings fell by nearly 5.5 per cent in 1994 due to a drop in crude prices caused by excess output by several producers, according to an official Arab report.

The income of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which controls 60 per cent of the world's crude, stood at \$82.4 billion in 1994 compared to \$87.2 billion in 1993. OPEC said in its 1994 annual report published in the Paris-based Arab Oil and Gas magazine.

The 1994 figure is the lowest since 1989, when OPEC's revenues plunged to \$78.5 billion, said the magazine, obtained here Sunday.

Oil prices averaged \$15.50 barrel in 1994 compared to \$16.33 in 1993 and \$18.44 in 1992.

In 1990 during the Gulf crisis, prices surged to nearly \$40, pushing Arab oil earnings to a seven-year high of \$96.5 billion.

The report showed Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) suffered most from the price fall, with their revenue dropping to \$38.3 billion and \$11 billion in 1994 from \$41.3 billion and \$13.5 billion respectively.

Libya, another key OPEC member, also saw its revenues shrink to \$6.9 billion from \$7.6 billion.

Kuwait's earnings increased to \$10.2 billion from \$9.5 billion due to a rise in its production to two million barrels per day (b/d) from around 1.8 million b/d in 1993.

Earnings also increased in Egypt, Bahrain and Algeria and declined in Syria, Qatar and Tunisia. Iraq, which produces around 500,000 b/d for local consumption because of

United Nations Gulf war sanctions, recorded a slight increase in income to \$365 million from \$364 million.

The report did not cover non-OAPEC producers Oman and Yemen, whose oil revenues were estimated at around \$5 billion in 1994.

The Kuwaiti-based OAPEC holds nearly 60 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves and its production of around 18 million b/d accounts for more than a quarter of the global crude supplies.

The erosion of the U.S. dollar, the official currency for oil prices, over the past two decades sharply depressed the organisation's income in real terms, according to the report. The 1994 revenue of \$82.4 billion is equivalent to only \$29.8 billion at the 1973 dollar value.

U.S. indicators suggest moderate inflation, growth

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The latest U.S. economic indicators suggest that Federal Reserve (Fed) efforts to counter inflation without bringing about recession are showing signs of success, analysts have said.

The Labour Department has announced that consumer prices have risen by 0.2 per cent in July, in line with predictions.

The latest figure was "very good" even if the rate was picking up, according to Delos Smith, an economist at the Conference Board, a New York institute.

The core rate, which excludes food and energy, was up by 0.2 per cent in July.

Over the first seven months of the year, consumer prices increased at an annual rate of 3.1 per cent, compared to 2.7 per cent over the same period last year, the Labour Department said.

But the steady price production index for July, due mainly to a drop in energy prices, shows that inflation is well under control, Mr. Smith added.

Economist Donald Ratajczak of the University of Georgia said that the weakness of raw material prices for July was a good sign of

continuing low inflation over the coming months.

Wholesale prices are a good barometer for future inflation trends, allowing to determine a trend before prices percolate down the system.

The economists also agreed that the economy seemed headed for growth in the second half of the year after stagnation in the first which led to fears of a recession and prompted the Federal Reserve to cut rates last month.

This followed a yearlong period, between February 1994 and 1995, when it raised rates seven times amid fears the economy was overheating.

Excluding autos, retail sales were up 0.4 per cent in July, unchanged from June's figure, a sign that consumer demand — the main engine for economic growth in the United States — remained steady, Mr. Ratajczak said.

Iran deflects effects of U.S. oil trade ban

ABU DHABI (R) — Iran has sold around 30 per cent of the oil previously bought by U.S. firms to Mediterranean customers in extra spot sales.

The Iranian source said Tehran's ability to maintain crude oil prices underscored the failure of the U.S. embargo.

"We have had a general policy of trying to diversify our customers and only a few months after the ban was imposed we have been successful to a large extent in lowering the effects of the embargo," the source told Reuters.

"The National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) has done its best to seek other markets in countries such as South Asia, Europe and South America. The feedback has been good," said the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The source would not say how much crude Iran had sold or planned to sell to those markets.

U.S. companies lifted an estimated 600,000 barrels per day of Iranian crude oil, worth about \$4 billion a year, before President Bill Clinton's ban on U.S. firms trading with Iran took effect in June.

Dealers estimate that Iran has sold around 30 per cent of the oil previously bought by U.S. firms to Mediterranean customers in extra spot sales.

The Iranian source said Tehran's ability to maintain crude oil prices underscored the failure of the U.S. embargo.

"We have been successful in selling our crude oil and keeping its price almost intact and competitive. This shows that NIOC has been able to tolerate the situation," the source said.

Washington accuses Iran of sponsoring international terrorism and seeking to develop nuclear weapons, charges repeatedly denied by Tehran.

The trade ban has pushed Iran, the second largest producer in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), to increasingly resort to the international shipping market.

The source said the efforts to offset the U.S. trade ban was reflected in the fact that Iran's National Iranian Tanker Co. (NITC) has ordered new tankers from South Korea and other countries and accelerated chartering activity.

Japanese government sees bright, dark signs in stalled economy

TOKYO (R) — The latest economic data may be riddled with gloomy indicators but Japan's government, anxious to find something positive to say, has taken heart from recent falls in the yen and rises in stock prices.

"Japan's economy is still at a standstill but there are both bright and dark indicators," the Economic Planning Agency (EPA) said in its monthly report.

The report represents the government's official assessment of the economy. It is the second month in a row the government has admitted economic recovery is at a standstill. Previously it had asserted the economy was still recovering, albeit moderately.

The EPA report said housing construction was down and business confidence had weakened due to the high yen and the economic slowdown in the United States. But it pointed out that there had been some retreat in the yen and a rise in stock prices.

The dollar recovered to above 90,000 yen in early August after hovering around 81 yen from June to early July. Tokyo stock prices also improved greatly in July.

"It's a tug-of-war situation," an EPA official told reporters.

"Although the real situation shows factors that could undermine the economy, recent good signs in currencies and stocks may brighten people's confidences," he said.

The official added that the economy still had potential to recover on the back of steady domestic demand such as corporate capital investment.



THE Daily Crossword by Diane C. Baldwin

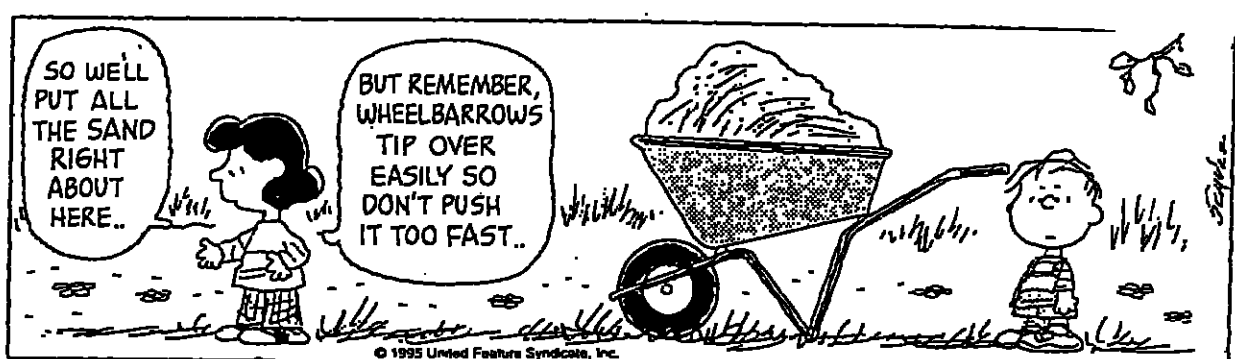
ACROSS

- Very rich person
- Quechuan
- "The Censor"
- Semblance
- Red and Coral
- Elvis-Presley link
- Down-at-heel spirit?
- Sluggest
- Pedestal part
- Mercurial
- Tic-toe
- dieu
- Impala's cousin
- Quiver and quake
- Made public
- Gin fruit
- Kind of jam
- Gridlock in the bleachers?
- Loser to DDE
- Impose, as a tax
- Scratch
- Hoodwink
- Gave the heave-ho
- Enjoy status
- Beludgement
- Sty youngster
- Low cart
- Paul Bunyan's ox
- Protection following a snub?
- Verbal
- "Exodus" author
- Meadow
- Diminish
- Hereditary unit
- A Roosevelt

DOWN

- Pique
- Khayyam
- Festive
- Like Andersen's duckling
- Sheltered side
- Author Asimov
- Social flop
- Dissonance
- Bat wood
- Went paddling
- Jason's vessel
- Pigeon chaser?
- Just
- Bismarck's state: abbr.
- In the thick of
- Nobel chemist
- Felt remorse
- Hindu music
- Put to work
- Clear a tape
- It's Big in London
- Spartacus, for one
- Prufrock's creator
- Esther of "Good Times"
- Dock worker
- Joyful
- Narrow cut
- Pollution problem
- Overly
- Rocking place
- Food
- Hopalong
- Cassidy actor
- Treacherous
- Garbage barge
- Sabra's dance
- Buck heroine
- Devastate
- Cracker spread
- Copied
- Undisguised
- Vortex
- Embrace
- Newt

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, AUGUST 14, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Begin this new week properly by getting in touch with any persons of big ideas who can be helpful to you in business.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Any group which can help you gain your aims should be contacted this morning and their alliance gained.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can be very creative at your career and this is a good day to do your best at such. State your finest ambitions.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You have some fine talents which should be made to work for you this morning, so concentrate on them later today.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Concentrate on home and family today and how best to improve the situation there. Be most careful in driving on the highway.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Have talks with regular partners and make better plans for today. Improve operations considerably at tasks you need to complete.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Study the profit you are getting for any tasks completed today and see if it is satisfactory. Try to be more generous with your loved ones.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are inspired to gain your ambitions today, so don't waste any time but get busy on them and get good results.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Have a quiet, thoughtful conversation with your family and plan what is best to do later today and tonight.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) If you are more direct with your friends today, all of your lives can be made better, more inspiring.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can begin this morning properly by getting support you need from a bigwig where a monetary interest is concerned.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You have a new plan in mind which can bring you closer to your personal aims today, so carry through with it.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

Windows 95 may leave consumers breathless, confused

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Microsoft's new Windows 95 operating system, coming out Aug. 24 in the biggest global product launch in computer history, may leave the average personal computer user dazed but also confused.

Microsoft, which makes the underlying software running 80 per cent of the world's personal computers, has refined this system to make it cleaner, faster and brighter, with a host of new capabilities.

Windows 95 users will have full "multitasking", or the ability to run two or more operations simultaneously, such as sending faxes while checking spelling on a report and remaining connected to an on-line network.

A reorganised "desktop" will make it easier to see what files are available, and this can be customised for different family members. Opening programmes and files will also be simplified, and getting rid of unwanted files will be as easy as dragging an icon to a "recycle" bin.

File names won't have to be limited to eight characters, as in the old system. So users can label their files "Letter to Mom" instead of "lstr mom.doc."

They will also get improved protection against computer viruses and a single location to receive electronic mail and fax communication.

"I think it's going to make computing much easier for the average person," said JoAnne Springer, assistant editor of Computer Life magazine. "In the usability tests we did, we found that people who don't know computers find this much easier to use."

"I'm really pleased. It will make using computers an effortless, natural and enjoyable process," said Rick Shaddock, a Washington computer instructor who has tested Windows 95.

With the new software, new hardware and accessories can be installed without complicated programming, because Windows 95 senses the equipment being used. This feature is known as "plug and play."

Microsoft says its 32-bit programme is like having a freeway expanded from 16 to 32 lanes. But it will take some time for the full features of Windows 95 to filter through to everyday computing.

For one, much of the new software and hardware that takes advantage of Windows

95 capabilities is not yet on the market. So "plug and play" may not work for some equipment and existing software may be no faster than on the current Windows 3.1 version.

Some computer buffs argue that Windows 95 is simply catching up with the operating system of Apple's Macintosh, which has had user-friendly features like a "trash can" and multitasking capabilities for a decade.

Meanwhile, for millions of people with existing PCs and Windows software, the decision on upgrading is a difficult one.

Microsoft is offering the new software to existing Windows owners at under \$100, yet most users will face higher costs in upgrading their systems.

For one, Windows 95 is greedy in its need for computer memory and hard disk storage space. Microsoft maintains the new software can be installed on computers

standard in the United States several years ago, with Intel 386 processors and four megabytes of RAM, or operating memory.

But reviewers who have tested the new system suggest the system works best with the newest computers on the market, with Pentium microchips, generous hard drives and eight to 16 megabytes of RAM. Upgrading these items could cost several hundred dollars.

Without a CD-ROM player, users will need to juggle 13 floppy disks to install Windows 95.

Owners of older computers "would be best off not (upgrading) if they're happy with what they've got," says Gregg Keizer, an Oregon-based freelance writer specialising in computers. "It's just an operating system... it doesn't automatically make all the things on their machines obsolete."

Despite the questions, computer experts note that

users, particularly in business, will have to adapt to Windows 95 sooner or later, if for other reasons than the dominance of Microsoft in the operating systems of new personal computers.

"Any company staying on the cutting edge of technology will eventually have to use it," said Bob Walker, a business consultant with Advanced Systems, Inc. "It will be a necessity for any modern corporation. You may not have a choice."

Business Daily Beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Consumer protection society sees unfairness in income, sales taxes

THE NATIONAL Society for the Consumers Protection is demanding that sole proprietors be given a 50 per cent exemption of their earnings from the income tax, similar to the percentage given to public and private sector employees. Moreover, the society demanded in a memorandum sent to the speaker and members of the Lower House of Parliament, that the ceiling under this exemption be raised from JD 7,200 to JD 12,000 annually.

The society also called in its memorandum to deduct fees paid to schools, from the taxable net income of a person, up to a ceiling of JD 500.

The memorandum said that both the sales tax and income tax provided some relief to the poor limited-income class of the society but, on the other hand, provided the better off class with larger benefits. As such, the memorandum added, the burden was shifted to the middle class which, under these laws, will erode and slide to the poor class (Al Ra'i).

THE NEW 1995 telephone directory for Amman will be on sale to the public in Arabic and English next week after being checked by the Telecommunications Corporation which has already received the first Arabic copy. The directory will be printed in batches, the first of 5,000 to be delivered next week (Al Dustour).

DUE TO higher exchange rates for the Swiss franc and the Deutschmark against the dinar, the prices of drugs imported from Germany and Switzerland were recently increased. Sources at the Ministry of Health said the price increase was slight and did only reflect 50 per cent of actual change in the currency value (Al Aswaaq).

THE MINISTER of energy and natural resources said the decision to close the quarries in Ajloun was taken because they were not properly licensed and because they were causing environmental damages to the region. The minister said Ajloun obtained licences for land reclamation from the Ministry of Agriculture, but as it turned out, they used it as a pretext to open quarries and sell stones (Al Ra'i).

THE JORDAN National Shipping Lines Company decided to purchase a new cargo vessel at a cost of \$6.25 million, bringing the number of vessels in its fleet to five. The company also intends to buy a sixth vessel before the end of this year to specifically transport bulk products. According to Yaser Al Tal, the company's general manager, the new vessel is a multi-purpose Brazilian-made ship, having a 7-year operational age and able to carry 15,000 tonnes. Purchased with financing from the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank, the new vessel is the second carrier bought by the company this year. Named the Blue Horizon, the new vessel will be carrying phosphate and potash to Indian ports alongside other leased ships. Mr. Al Tal pointed out that the company, now capitalised at JD 7 million, had made profits in excess of JD 15 million since it was set up in 1980. Asked about joint marine transport between Jordanian and Israeli ports, Mr. Al Tal said the matter was still not clear. However, he said that "if we could consolidate our current drive to reduce the Suez Canal fees and put enough incentives to marine freight companies in Akaba, then the Israeli port's (activity) on the Mediterranean and the Red Sea will not have much effect on Akaba (Al Ra'i).

Financial Markets

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (August 7 - August 11, 1995)

AMMAN — The U.S. unit rose sharply against other major currencies last week. It ended the week 2.66 per cent higher against the yen, 2.61 per cent higher against the mark, and 2.12 per cent against sterling.

The dollar rose more than a pfenning against the mark Monday upon renewed expectations that the Bundesbank might lower German interest rates at its meeting the following Thursday. Reports indicated that the dollar's rally against the mark accelerated after it broke resistance at 1.4030 marks.

The U.S. unit was little changed against other major currencies Tuesday, however. Traders were watching the U.S. Treasury three year note auction, the 1st leg of a \$42.5 billion treasury refunding, to verify whether Japan's deregulatory move to stimulate investment overseas will encourage Japanese investors' appetite for U.S. Treasuries. The dollar fell as markets were disappointed by the weak showing of Japanese investors, but it recovered later that day on hopes that Japanese buying will emerge in the next two legs of the refunding.

The dollar closed narrowly mixed against other major currencies Wednesday. Reports indicated that the 2nd leg of the U.S. Treasury auction was more than favourable. But auction results did not trigger dollar buying as traders remained on the sidelines ahead of a Bundesbank Council meeting and the 3rd leg of U.S. Treasury auction the following day.

The dollar surged against other major currencies Thursday. The U.S. unit rose after the release of the Producer Price Index showing that U.S. inflationary pressures remain subdued. The index was unchanged in July after dipping in June. The dollar's rally accelerated when stop loss orders surfaced. Reports indicated that the 3rd leg of U.S. Treasury auction attracted strong bidding, yet did not contribute to the dollar's rally. Meanwhile, traders were disappointed after Bundesbank Council members left official interest rates unchanged.

The dollar continued its strong rally against other major currencies at the end of the week. It rose on comments by a Bundesbank official, who said that banks had room to lower bids on the securities repurchase rate. In addition, rumours that hedge funds run by financier George Soros were placing bets on a higher dollar drove the U.S. unit higher. Meanwhile, analysts indicated that the regulatory move that the Japanese government took to stimulate investment overseas, the concerted intervention led by the Bank of Japan and the Fed to support the dollar, and dealers' expectations that the Bundesbank might ease its monetary policy soon, are the factors that were driving for a higher dollar.

The U.S. unit, thus ended the week at 1.4347 marks, 93.90 yen and at \$1.5715 to sterling.

NEW YORK Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	Friday August 11, 1995	Thursday August 10, 1995	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.6055	1.5715	(2.12) %
Deutsche Mark	1.3972	1.4347	(2.61) %
Swiss Franc	1.1525	1.1945	(3.52) %
French Franc	4.8680	4.9500	(2.87) %
Japanese Yen	91.40	93.90	(2.66) %

USD Per STD

Euro-Currency Interest Rates

Currency	1-Month (%)	3-Month (%)	6-Month (%)	1-Year (%)
U.S. Dollar	5.84	5.68	5.73	5.93
Sterling Pound	6.75	7.12	6.65	6.94
Deutsche Mark	4.31	4.35	4.37	4.43
Swiss Franc	2.62	2.75	2.73	2.93
French Franc	5.62	5.76	6.00	5.50
Japanese Yen	0.81	0.88	0.87	0.78

Interest rates are for accounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	0.7060	0.7080
Sterling Pound	1.1080	1.1135
Deutsche Mark	0.4900	0.4925
Swiss Franc	0.5900	0.5930
French Franc	0.1424	0.1431
Japanese Yen	0.7506	0.7544
Dutch Guilder	0.4374	0.4390
Swedish Krona		
Italian Lira	0.0440	0.0442
Belgian Franc		

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COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE	PREV. CLOSING PRICE
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JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	5250	23272	4.500 4.450
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	5900	7357	1.250 1.250
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	200	508	2.520 2.540
THE HOUSING BANK	250	1400	5.750 5.400
JORDAN KUNAFI BANK	135	372	2.800 2.750
JORDAN GULF BANK	7750	8720	1.140 1.140
JORDAN TELANGI BANK	772	2855	3.750 3.700
BUSINESS BANK	450	1724	3.850 3.830
BRIT KHALD SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	80	173	2.450 2.450
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	69285	71957	1.060 1.040
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	1424	5421	1.600 1.590
BANKS SECTOR	93666	166448	INDEX NUMBER: 127.34 CHANGE: -0.472
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	400	1079	2.700 2.700
HOLY LAND INSURANCE	1834	4295	2.820 2.800
INSURANCE SECTOR	1934	5374	INDEX NUMBER: 133.64 CHANGE: 0.007
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	85250	103984	1.620 1.613
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	1300	3627	2.830 2.790
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	2900	6261	2.210 2.150
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	1000	1170	1.200 1.170
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMERCIAL HOTELS	4500	9753	2.140 2.200
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	1100	3476	3.160 3.150
KARMA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	1500	2010	1.370 1.340
SERVICES SECTOR	77350	130281	INDEX NUMBER: 126.38 CHANGE: -0.592
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	6148	21882	3.580 3.650
JORDAN FERTILISER WORKS	4700	14309	3.030 3.030
THE ARAB POTASH	170	815	5.000 4.890
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	1760	16527	9.880 9.430
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	2894	14222	5.000 5.000
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	1550	8060	5.300 5.200
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	6300	2835	4.460 4.450
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	2900	3981	1.420 1.370
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	2700	2720	1.030 1.000
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	3900	6273	2.230 2.120
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	3250	7180	2.200 2.200
UNIVERSAL HOUSEHOLD INDUSTRIES	9670	31420	3.200 3.270
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	12750	35177	2.080 2.050
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	2250	3738	1.700 1.660
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	9066	12338	1.370 1.380
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	74508	183438	INDEX NUMBER: 127.03 CHANGE: -0.022
GRAND TOTAL	247658	485540	INDEX NUMBER: 152.36 CHANGE: -0.332
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	113574		
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET	110591		

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On the occasion of the Independence Day of India, a flag-hoisting ceremony will be held on Tuesday August 15, 1995 at 10 a.m. at the premises of the Embassy of India, First Circle, Jabal Amman (Opposite Malhas Hospital).

All Indians and persons of Indian origin in Jordan with their family members are cordially invited to attend the function.

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Dominique Wilkins leaves NBA to join Panathinaikos of Greece

ATHENS (AP) — Dominique Wilkins has left the Boston Celtics to sign with a professional team in Greece. Panathinaikos Athens said Saturday it had signed the 2.03-metre (6-foot-8) forward. Press reports said Wilkins, 35, signed a two-year contract for \$7 million, the richest contract for a player outside the National Basketball Association.

Wilkins had two years remaining on his contract with the Celtics, but his contract contained a buyout clause. Recently, Wilkins was involved in a dispute with the team over an \$8.4 million loan he claimed he was owed. Because of the NBA lockout, the team said he wasn't entitled to the money.

Celtics officials could not be reached for comment. Panathinaikos and its archrival Olympiakos are Greece's

two major teams. In the last two seasons, Panathinaikos finished third in the European Championship behind Olympiakos.

Drafted in 1982 by Utah, Wilkins played more than 11 seasons with the Atlanta Hawks before being traded to the Los Angeles Clippers in February 1994 in exchange for Danny Manning.

His best season was 1985-86, when he led the NBA in scoring with 30.3 points a game.

In July 1994, Wilkins signed as a free agent with the Celtics but wasn't a success. Coach Chris Ford benched him early in the season, and Wilkins averaged just 17.8 points, his lowest average since his rookie season, and shot a career-low 42 per cent from the field.

World Athletics Championships

O'Sullivan, Pedroso set the record straight

GOTHENBURG (AP) — Smiling Sonia O'Sullivan set the tone at the world championships here on Saturday. It was time to prove a point and set the record straight.

O'Sullivan at last took the title many felt she should have won two years ago when she was swept aside by a Chinese clean-sweep.

Her 5,000m win on Saturday also earned her a slice of history as she became Ireland's first woman world champion.

The dramatic decline, however, of Qu Yunxia — who led in that 3,000m triumvirate ahead of O'Sullivan in 1993 — and the rest of Ma Junren's former force has worried many athletics commentators since.

O'Sullivan, who trains in London with a stable of world-class Kenyans, simply wanted to prove the point that she was world champion material.

"I did what I came here to do," she said. Which was to bide her time before destroying double-seeking 10,000m champion Fernanda

Ribeiro of Portugal over a scintillating final 200m.

Cuban Ivan Pedroso also proved a point.

The 22-year-old let 1991 and 1993 gold medalist Mike Powell — nine years his elder — know that his reign as the world number one is over as he leapt 8.70m for the long jump gold.

He also let the International Amateur Athletic Federation bosses know that they may rule out his "world record," recorded just before the championships, but they cannot take his new-found status away from him.

Pedroso jumped 8.96 in Italy last month to overtake Powell's epic 1991 jump in Mexico by a single centimetre, but the IAAF are still grumbling over the presence of an official in front of the wind gauge, that windy day.

But actions tend to speak louder than words.

Powell's failure — he even allowed Jamaican 20-year-old James Beckford to edge past him on his final jump — again, by a single centimetre — seemed to suggest the

times are changing in favour of fresher faces.

American Allen Johnson did the same in the 110m hurdles, proving the point to yesterday's man Roger Kingdom.

He later surge gave her a championship best 14 minutes 46.47 seconds while the Portuguese runner, all guts to O'Sullivan's grace, took silver ahead of Zohra Ouziz of Morocco.

American joy over the hurdles — which returned the title to the nation that delighted in Greg Foster's wins in 1983, 1987 and 1991 — was not matched by the history-making sprint relay squad.

Unbeaten in the world championships and the holders of the Olympic title and world record, they blundered like schoolboys, losing in the heats following an abortive change-over between Jon Drummond and Theodore McCall.

Later, the British were run out of their semi-final, ending any chance that Linford Christie, who wrenched his

hamstring as he was deposed in the 100m, might make a dramatic final-day return.

If the American performance seemed casual, Martin Fiz's didn't.

The Spaniard — who shares his physical trainer with cycling legend Miguel Indurain, the five-times winner of the Tour de France — showed huge reserves of courage to win the marathon.

Dionicio Ceron of Mexico, the world's best for the last three years, kicked three kilometres from the end of an event that had turned into a two-horse race.

But European champion Fiz dug in despite dropping a dangerous 15m back, crept up again and stormed past in 2hr 11min 41sec.

That time, it seems, will stand. The organisers — unlike the American relay — got it right this time.

They had allowed the women's event at the start of the championships to be run over a course that turned out to be 400m short of the stipulated 42.195.

'Hitting soccer ball with head may sap mental skills'

NEW YORK (AP) — Soccer players who repeatedly use their heads to whack the ball risk losses in mental skills, says a study that found problems in athletes as young as teenagers.

Players who said they "headed" the ball more than 10 times a game showed lower average scores than other players on tests of attention, concentration and overall mental functioning.

Evidence of harm from less frequent heading was inconsistent, suggesting that some other influence like proper technique might help protect against the effect, said researcher Adrienne Witol.

The study, which included 60 players from high school, college and a professional team, did not test children younger than 14. But Witol said children may be at risk because they have smaller bodies, weaker neck muscles and less experience in proper heading technique than older players.

The researchers did not assess what the lower scores on their tests meant for the daily lives of players. They described their study as an initial sign that the effects of heading on the brain must be studied further.

In the meantime, Witol said in an interview that parents of young soccer players should not panic. "This is a preliminary study. You don't base a huge decision on whether or not soccer play is horribly dangerous and pull kids out based on one study," he said.

He added, however: "If I had a child, I would discourage him from heading the ball until I had more answers."

Witol is a neuropsychology fellow in the department of physical medicine and rehabilitation at the medical college of Virginia, which is part of Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. She presented the study Saturday at the annual meeting of the American psychological association.

"I think Dr. Witol alerts us to a potential problem in this country with soccer and in particular, heading," commented Jeffrey T. Barth, chief of psychology at the University of Virginia medical school.

Barth, who has studied the effects of mild head injuries on college football players, also stressed that the results are preliminary.

The effect on everyday life, how long the impairments last and even whether they really come from the impact with the ball rather than some other aspect of playing soccer must still be studied, he said.

He also noted that heading is not as common among children as among high school players. He said he would not be concerned about harm to elementary-school players.

Relegated Crystal Palace, Leicester win on opening day

LONDON (AFP) — Relegated pair Crystal Palace and Leicester made successful starts to their campaigns for a rapid return to the Premiership on Saturday but there was no such joy for Ipswich, who crashed at English First division new boys Birmingham.

Palace emerged from a summer of upheaval to clinch a nerve-racking 4-3 win over Barnsley in an exciting clash at Selhurst Park.

Palace's relegation from the Premiership last season was followed by the departure of manager Alan Smith and a series of big-name stars.

The new season started badly, though, when Steve Davis fired Barnsley in front after 12 minutes.

But captain and Republic of Ireland star Ray Houghton levelled after quarter of an hour, Northern Ireland striker Iain Dowie scored either side of the break, and Dean Gordon who wants to leave the club netted a fourth after 60 minutes.

Adrian Vives and Andy Liddell hit back for Barnsley, but Palace held out to clinch three points.

Former Manchester United sharp shooter Mark Robins netted a 69th-minute

winner as Leicester beat Sunderland 2-1 at Roker Park.

Australian international Steve Corica, signed on Friday from Sydney club Marconi, had given the Foxes a flying start with a stunning 20-yard drive before former Filbert Street favourite Steve Agnew levelled for Sunderland.

Paul Tait, Ricky Otto and Jason Bowen, newly signed from Swansea, made the scoresheet as last season's second division champions Birmingham bounced back to clinch a 3-1 win after going behind to Ian Marshall's 47th-minute opener for Ipswich.

Title favourites Wolves had to be satisfied with a 2-2 draw after twice leading at Tranmere.

Former England star Steve Bull and Don Goodman were on target for Graham Taylor's side while Republic of Ireland international midfielder Liam O'Brien and the ever-dangerous John Aldridge netted for the Birkenhead club.

Gerry Creaney, Portsmouth's top scorer last term, got this season off to a bright start by netting twice in the 4-2 win over Southend.

Pompey's other goals came from a Steve Tilson own goal

and Jason Rees while Andy Thomson got both for Southend.

Dave Gilbert and Chris Malkin scored debut goals to help West Brom and Millwall to victory.

Three days later, West Brom from Grimsby, gave West Brom a 1-0 home win over Charlton while his former club were punished by ex-club Trannmere man Malkin, who helped Millwall to a 2-1 victory.

Alex Rae got the Londoners off the mark from the penalty spot while Steve Livingstone pulled one back for Grimsby after Malkin had struck.

Derek Payne and Richard Johnson ensured Sheffield United manager Dave Bassett had a fruitless return to his former club Watford.

Welsh international Nathan Blake got the Blades' goal in a 2-1 defeat.

Adrian Williams' late effort earned Reading a 1-1 draw at Stoke, who had gone ahead through Ray Wallace.

And Mark Brennan scored twice as Oldham overwhelmed new boys Huddersfield, promoted via the second division play-offs.

Former Aberdeen midfielder Lee Richardson completed the Latics' 3-0 Boundary Park romp.

Agassi breezes through in soaring temperatures

CINCINNATI (AP) — Andre Agassi shed his black look Saturday as temperatures on court soared to 43 degrees centigrade, staying cool enough to beat Swede Thomas Enqvist 6-4, 6-2, for a place in the final of the \$1.8-million ATP championship.

Agassi, the eight seed and world number one, dispensed with his usual image-driven black shoes and socks, replacing them with white models for the match, his third final in as many tournaments.

The American was red-hot in the sweltering summer heat as he dismantled the game of 13th seed Enqvist in a battle of the fittest.

"Hey, I came out as prepared as possible for the conditions," said Agassi, who has won titles in Washington and Montreal in recent weeks. "Black socks and shoes don't make it in these temperatures, so I switched."

"I peaked at the right time against a dangerous player. I hope that I can keep that up for the final."

The winner will face the victor of the contest between defending champion Michael Chang, seeded fourth, and number eight German Michael Stich.

Agassi ran his 1995 record against Swedes to 8-1 and his



Andre Agassi

overall mark to 80-9 since the U.S. Open last year.

Agassi has been formidable on hardcourts, with his only two losses from 42 matches on the surface coming to world number two rival Pete Sampras, both in tournament finals.

There was little drama in the semi-final, which Agassi wrapped up with a minimum of effort. He broke the 21-year-old Enqvist in the fifth game of the opening set and

again in the first and fifth of the second as he secured victory in 69 minutes.

"He didn't miss and was running me everywhere," said Enqvist, who has won three titles on three different surfaces so far this year. "I was like a car without an engine."

"I had no power left in my body. This is my fourth week of tournaments. Andre made me run a lot, he was playing too well."

Rubin ousts Sanchez, faces Martinez

MANHATTAN BEACH (R) — Tenth seed Chanda Rubin took full advantage of a below-par Arantxa Sanchez Vicario to defeat the top seed 6-3, 6-1 on Saturday and advance into the final of the Acura Classic against Conchita Martinez of Spain.

The second seeded-Martinez beat unseeded Indonesian Yayuk Basuki 6-1, 7-6 (7-4) in the day's second

semifinal. Sanchez Vicario broke to lead 2-1 and then held two break points for a 4-1 lead.

But the rest of the match belonged to Rubin, the 19-year-old Louisiana daughter of a judge.

Her strong forehand and ability to stretch her opponent wide, backed up by her willingness to come in to the net when she had the oppor-

tunity, meant the biggest win of her career was well-deserved.

"I really attacked well and executed my game plan, which was to hit out on my forehand and get in when I could. I wanted to get her on the move, and to mix it up and not hit everything deep, and it worked," said Rubin, who upset Argentine Gabriela Sabatini in the quarter-

finals.

While Rubin was aggressive, Sanchez Vicario was a pale shadow of her normal self. Her serve was completely ineffective, she was slow and lethargic, and after the first few games she posed no threat at all.

Martinez reached her second final in the two weeks by ending the run of Basuki, who had upset three seeds on her way to the semifinals.

Although Basuki held four break points at 1-2 in the second set, the Spaniard stayed in control. At 5-3 she held match point, but Basuki saved it with a lob as Martinez complained the Indonesian's serve had been long.

Martinez was surprised she has such an easy match after being taken to three sets in their last two meetings.

Torrence gets revenge; Morceli wins 1500m

GOTHENBURG, Sweden (AFP) — Bitter Gwen Torrence got her revenge over rival Merlene Ottey as she

anchored the American sprint relay squad to gold here.

The race ended with a per-

fect head-to-head between the two, but Torrence — the 100m individual winner who was stripped of the 200m title

for running out of her lane — powered away from Ottey to win by three metres in a time of 42.12 sec.

Torrence did not give Ottey — who was awarded the 200m title in her place and then rubbed it in by calling the American a cheat — so much as a look as she crossed the finish with arms raised.

Russia, without the injured Irina Privalova, the individual 200m silver and 100m bronze medalist, bungled their baton changing and failed to finish.

The United States' only other win in the event came in 1987 at Rome.

Unbeatable Nouredine Morceli staked a claim to the title of all-time great as he sealed a hat-trick of 1,500m world titles.

The Algerian, unbeaten over the distance since the 1992 Olympics, produced a masterly display over the final lap to finish alone in 3min 33.73.

Burundian Venuste Niyongabo, typed up as the great pretender, lost the silver on the line as the even younger Hicham El Guerrouj, of Morocco caught him in the straight, clocking 3:35.28.

Sprinter Donovan Bailey anchored the all-conquering Canadians to the 4x100m,



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Adel Imam in
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Jordanian popular support for Saddam has dwindled

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — Jordanians who embraced Iraqi President Saddam Hussein as a long-awaited saviour during the 1990-91 Gulf crisis now blame him for impoverishing his people.

"It's the Iraqis I care for, not the regime... in the early period I supported Saddam but now no longer, because his people cannot find food to eat and he has pulled Iraq 100 years backward," said Subhi Halabi, owner of a clothing shop in central Amman.

Some Jordanians say the defection to Jordan of President Saddam's son-in-law and mastermind of Iraq's military programs, Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel Hassan, exposed deep cracks within Iraq's ruling circles.

Gen. Hassan's remarks on Saturday that he had lost hope of changing the Saddam government from within have reinforced misgivings many Jordanians had about the man they once loved as the only Arab leader who dared to fire missiles at Israel.

"The regime has lost its credibility, because Saddam did not present anything... nothing positive has happened over the last five years," said Husam Lutfi, an employee.

Jordanians and Palestinians were once the most enthusiastic supporters of the Iraqi president, staging spontaneous demonstrations of solidarity in both Amman and Israeli-occupied West Bank towns after his invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Riyad Shorabji, a doctor, said: "All of us supported him at first, pleased he would restore Palestine but our support has gone when we saw how the Iraqi people were unjustly treated and impoverished."

Amjad Al Ramini, a Jordanian living in Saudi Arabia, said it was time President Saddam was overthrown "because the whole world was against him and there was no reason anymore for him to stay... economic conditions necessitate he is changed."

Sultan Abu Zahra, a trader, said Jordanians ecstatically supported Presi-

dent Saddam during the Gulf war "because he exploited their emotions to silence them over his occupation of Kuwait... by firing a few useless Scuds they believed he was the leader who would rid them of Israel."

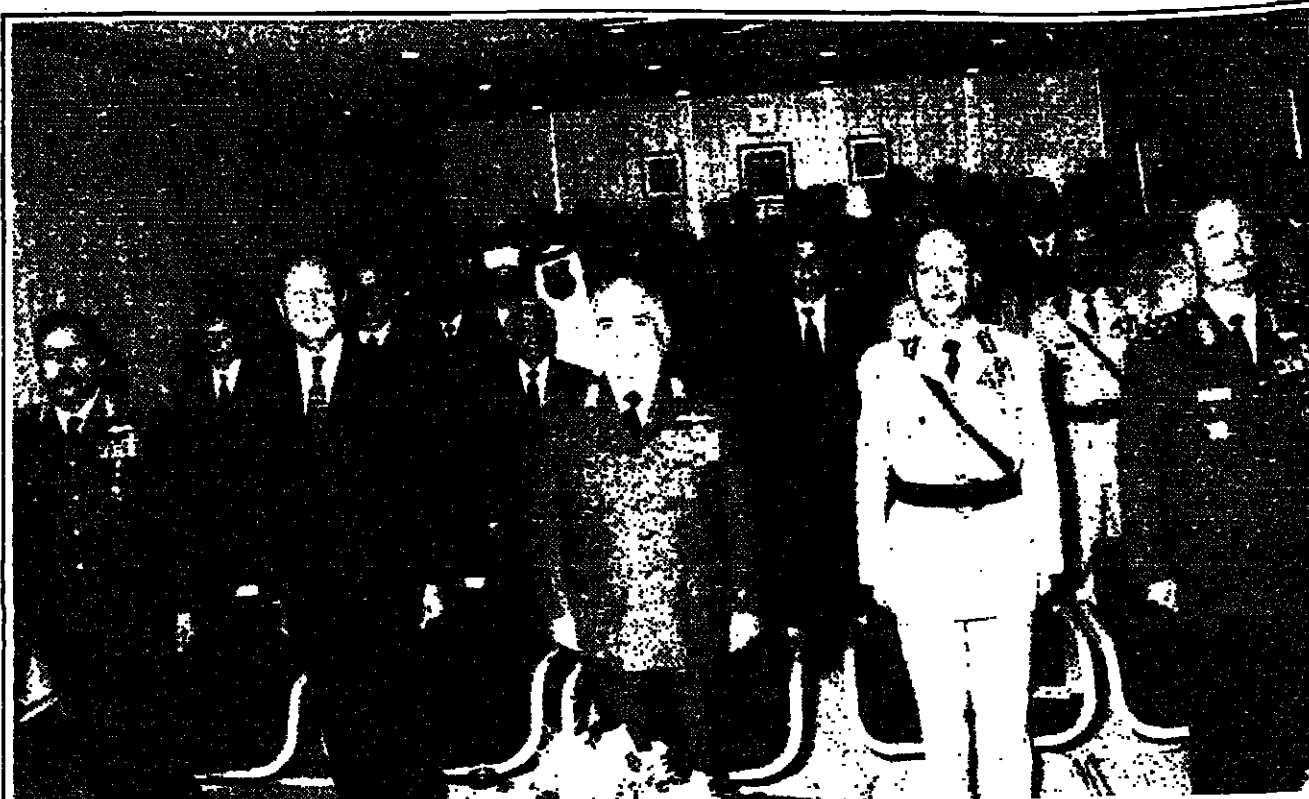
"The whole attitude of Jordan has changed and the Iraqi regime has lost favour, you only need to see his people sleeping in the streets."

Some blame President Saddam for economic hardships in Jordan.

"What Saddam did in Kuwait was not appropriate in its timing and today with the economic pressures on Iraq and its impact on Jordan, all this has lessened peoples support," said Rafea Mahmoud.

"What have we gained from the Gulf war? It brought us poverty and calamities and the hatred of other countries," said Ouni Saleem.

President Saddam's few remaining admirers say a comprehensive judgment on his actions will only come in decades, after the secrets of the Gulf crisis are fully unveiled.



AIR FORCE GRADUATION: His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday attends the graduation ceremony of a batch of air force officers at the Command and Staff College. The graduating students included officers from the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Pakistan and Malaysia as well as Jordan. The ceremony was also attended by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal and Prince Hamzah, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and senior officials (Armed Forces photo)

Iraqi refugees doubt defector can topple Saddam Hussein

By Jamal Halaby
The Associated Press

AMMAN — Iraqi refugees said Sunday they were suspicious of the high-ranking army officer who defected from Saddam Hussein's inner circle and doubted he could rally enough support to undermine the Iraqi strongman.

"I'm sure that Saddam will be able to contain this family crisis," said George Daoud, an Iraqi refugee who is a civil engineer.

Hussein Kamel Al-Majid, President Saddam's son-in-law and the man who headed Iraq's weapons programme, told a news conference Saturday that he was in contact with Iraqi opposition inside and outside Iraq as part of an effort to topple President Saddam.

But Iraq's many opposition groups have long suffered from internal feuding and have been unable to build a united front against President Saddam. In addition, refugees said General Hassan was responsible for many of the abuses carried out under President Saddam's rule, and therefore lacked credibility as an opposition leader.

"He is trying to present himself as Mr. Clean, but he will not be able to fool us," said a 55-year-old Iraqi who asked not to be identified by name.

Hassan is responsible for a lot of killings and executions of Iraqis and he is just another face of the coin to Saddam.

Jordan gave asylum to Gen. Hassan, his brother Saddam, their wives, children and army escorts after they fled to Amman on Tuesday. Altogether they numbered about 30.

They join more than 30,000 Iraqis who have fled their homeland to Jordan in the aftermath of the 1990-91 Gulf crisis over Kuwait.

Jordan, which depends on Iraq for its oil supplies, has not allowed Iraqi exiles to use the Kingdom as a base to rally opposition against President Saddam. It is unlikely that the defectors will be permitted to use the refugees to build an anti-Saddam front.

Gen. Hassan, a confidant of President Saddam for nearly two decades, said Saturday that he wanted to remove his father-in-law from power in order to end Iraq's isolation and turn the country into a "modern state."

But one Iraqi refugee, a former university professor who's now a waiter at an Amman restaurant, said Gen. Hassan "did not offer a clear programme to us and he did not even mention that he was considering the liberalisation of Iraq or respecting human rights."

"I beg King Hussein not to protect Hussein Kamel," said the 65-year-old Iraqi who sipped his coffee at an Amman coffee shop. "Hussein Kamel is as evil as Saddam."

Some Iraqi refugees were also critical of the United States and other countries for welcoming the defections, but not taking steps to lift the international sanctions that have impoverished Iraq's 18 million people since they were imposed five years ago.

"I am surprised to see the whole world interested in the defections, but nobody cares for the more important issue of the plight of Iraqis under the sanctions," said an Iraqi taxi driver, who identified himself only as Mohammed.

Many Iraqis said they believed Gen. Hassan fled Iraq due to family disputes, and felt President Saddam had begun to narrow the circle around him in favour of his sons, Oudai and Qusai, and some of his half-brothers.

Gen. Hassan said Saturday there was a power struggle within the ruling family. But he claimed his reason for seeking President Saddam's ouster was to "make the Iraqi people happy, end their problems and continued wars and help bring stability to the country."

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UNESCO approves temple light show project

PARIS (AFP) — UNESCO's World Heritage Committee has given the go-ahead for Indonesia to stage a controversial spectacle close to an ancient Buddhist temple at Borobudur, in central Java, project officials said here Saturday.

The seven-person committee chaired by Gerard Bolla, a deputy director general of the world cultural organisation and also an expert on the 9th-century temple, finally agreed to the Son et Lumiere project after an exhaustive study lasting several months. However the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation demanded guarantees that the spectacle would not harm the monument or the close environs in any way. It authorised two sessions of 45 minutes each per day in front of audiences initially of no more than 500 people — although the number could later be raised to 2,000 — for a total of 200 days per year during the dry season, the official said. It also demanded that the text written for the spectacle avoid any terms that could cause offense to Buddhists. An earlier version of the project presented in January gave rise to strong objections by the Heritage Committee. The Indonesian delegation, headed by the director-general for tourism, Andi Mappi Samwang, held extensive talks over several weeks with UNESCO experts.

King Hussein graduated last week to a new day. King Hussein's comments published in the day it was "the right change" in Iraq and he hoped that the change would be for the better people of Iraq.

"This is the right change, but it's not to determine (whether it happens). If a change made, it will only be for the good," the king said in an interview with Yediot Ahronot published on Monday.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Hizbollah attacks Israeli position

MARJAYOUN (AFP) — Hizbollah guerrillas rocketed the Israeli position of Dabseh in the "security zone" of South Lebanon on Sunday for the second day running, pro-Israeli sources said. They lobbed several mortars and rockets into the Israeli-occupied zone prompting Israeli artillery to retaliate while Israeli helicopters made reconnaissance flights, sources close to Israel's proxy militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), said. Hizbollah, in a statement from Beirut, claimed the attack left several casualties and said they destroyed fortifications in Dabseh. An Israeli helicopter was seen evacuating the casualties, the militia said. There was no independent confirmation of the claim. Three Israeli soldiers, including an officer, were wounded on Saturday when Hizbollah guerrillas launched a mortar attack on Dabseh, which commands access to the central part of the security zone.

Clergymen clash over organ transplants

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's two highest Islamic authorities, the mufti and the sheikh of Al Azhar Mosque, disagreed on the principle of organ transplants in the government daily Al Akhbar on Sunday. The mufti, Sheikh Mohammad Sayed Tantawi, issued a "fatwa" or religious ruling that Islam allowed "transplanting the liver from a clinically dead person to a fatally ill patient." He based the ruling on the principle that a patient is dead if the brain and vital organs have stopped functioning even if the heart is still beating. But the imam of Al Azhar, Sheikh Gad Al Haq Ali Gad Al Haq, differed with the mufti, implicitly calling such a transplant murder. "As long as the heart is functioning the person is not dead. Clinical death is not complete death. So his life must not be ended by removing an organ even if his condition is hopeless," the imam told Al Akhbar. Egypt's mufti and the sheikh of Al Azhar have issued contradictory religious rulings on several issues, most notably on female circumcision. Tantawi ruled that circumcision could be banned if doctors advocated it while Gad Al Haq said the practice was a religious duty that must be followed.

Turkish troops kill 23 Kurdish rebels

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Turkish troops killed 23 rebel Kurdish guerrillas in several clashes in southeastern and eastern Turkey, an official statement said on Sunday. Thirteen members of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) and a government soldier were killed in a clash near Mazgirt town in the eastern province of Tunceli on Saturday, a statement from the regional governor's office said. Ten rebels were killed in clashes in southeastern provinces of Bingol, Bitlis and Batman, on Saturday, the regional governor's office said. More than 17,500 people have been killed in the PKK's war for independence or autonomy in southeastern Turkey since 1984.

Nubian museum to open in Egypt in mid-1996

CAIRO (AFP) — The first museum of Nubian antiquities will open in south Egypt in mid 1996, a decade after construction on it was begun, an official with the Egyptian Antiquities Agency told AFP on Sunday. The museum, located in the town of Aswan, will contain 5,000 artifacts discovered in Egyptian Nubia from the pharaonic, Greco-Roman, Christian and Islamic eras, Ramzi Negib, the director of Nubian antiquities, said. "Construction of the museum and its garden of 43 hectares (106 acres) began in 1986 and a total cost of 60 million Egyptian pounds (\$15 million)," Negib said. The garden will display aspects of Nubian life, including a traditional baked-mud house, models of the Nile catamarans and of the Aswan High Dam, he added. Aswan, Egypt's southernmost city, became the centre of its Nubian population after the completion in 1972 of the dam creating Lake Nasser, which submerged the Nubians' traditional lands extending into Sudan. Also known as the land of Kush, Nubia was a semi-independent kingdom during Egypt's pharaonic era. Nubia boasts the two temples of Abu Simbel built by Ramses II (1300-1234 B.C.), which were moved in the 1960 to avoid the rising lake.

New York airports on high alert

NEW YORK (R) — New York's three airports went on high-security alert after receiving information from law enforcement officers, officials said on Sunday. The heightened alert followed a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) warning of a possible attack by "Islamic radicals," the Long Island newspaper Newsday said. The Port Authority — which manages New York City's John F. Kennedy and LA Guardia airports and the Newark airport — would not confirm that report. "At some point on Saturday, there was communication between our agency and the FAA, and a decision was made to elevate security at the airports," authority spokeswoman Joy Faber said. Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Arlene Salac said information from law enforcement agencies prompted the high-security alert. She would not confirm the Newsday report.

Shin Bet told not to shake prisoners

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel's attorney general has ruled the Shin Bet secret police can no longer violently shake suspects during interrogation, the Haaretz newspaper said on Sunday.

In April, Abdul Samed Harizat, a suspected Islamic Hamas activist, died of injuries sustained during a Shin Bet interrogation. A Scottish doctor who attended the Israeli autopsy said his injuries were caused by violent shaking.

According to the newspaper, Attorney General Michael Ben-Yair suggested he would extend other powers of the Shin Bet to use increased force against suspects on condition they stopped shaking prisoners.

Mr. Ben-Yair said shaking was illegal, based on expert medical opinion that it could lead to death or brain damage, Haaretz reported.

Officials from the attorney general's office and the Justice Ministry had no immediate comment on the report.

According to Haaretz, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Police Minister Moshe Shahal back Shin Bet in its claim that violent jerking is useful when interrogating prisoners about planning attacks against Israelis, Haaretz said.

Israel relaxed interrogation rules for its secret police last year after Palestinian militants began a series of deadly suicide bombings against Israelis. Special powers were granted for three months and have been extended several times.

In the late 1980s, a state commission ruled moderate physical pressure was permissible during interrogations of suspected "terrorists." Israeli and Palestinian human rights activists have long criticised the Landau commission's guidelines as a license to torture.

Ten days ago an Israeli ministerial committee extended by a week the powers of the Shin Bet secret police to use increased force.

The ministerial committee is scheduled to meet this week to clarify interrogation methods the Shin Bet may employ. But Haaretz quoted a justice official as saying that Mr. Ben-Yair's ruling on shaking meant the committee would have to rule out at least that method.

The Egyptian press and human rights groups sharply attacked Saudi Arabia for punishing Mr. Khalifa

Egyptian sentenced to 4,000 lashes in S. Arabia

CAIRO (AP) — Amnesty International says that an Egyptian national, Mohammad Ali Sayyid, has been flogged 3,400 times as part of a 4,000-lash sentence given for theft by a Saudi court.

Egyptian human rights officials said Sunday they were checking the report, obtained over the weekend from the London-headquartered Amnesty.

The Amnesty report said Mr. Sayyid, who is in his 30s, was believed arrested in 1991 and had been denied family visits and legal representation since. The exact nature of the theft charges was not known.

The report quoted former prisoners in Al Qassim province as saying Mr. Sayyid was being subjected to 50 lashes every two weeks and also was serving a seven-year prison term.

Amnesty said the floggings were administered in a marketplace by a policeman using a metre-long bamboo cane.

"Each flogging session is said to leave Mohammad with bruised or bleeding buttocks and unable to sleep or sit for three or four days afterwards," the report said.

Al Qassim is the same province where an Egyptian doctor, Mohammad Kamel Khalifa, was given 80 lashes after a court convicted him of slander. He had been trying to pursue a complaint that his 10-year-old son was sexually molested by a Saudi school headmaster.

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5 dead as Mogadishu gunmen fire on civilians

MOGADISHU (AFP) — At least five people were killed and 15 wounded in separate incidents when unidentified gunmen indiscriminately opened fire on crowds of defenceless civilians in southern Mogadishu on Sunday.

In one incident, four people were killed on the spot and eight others wounded when 10 gunmen in a Toyota pickup armed with heavy and small machine guns, rocket-propelled grenade launcher and small rifles opened fire on a public transport bus.

Among the dead was a woman who died inside the bus, while the other three were killed as they tried to escape the shootout. The wounded were all rushed to Digfer hospital for treatment.

In the second incident outside Mogadishu's new seaport, one person was shot dead and four wounded when a machine-gunned vehicle fired at a small car carrying members of the port administration.

The reasons behind the two attacks were not known, but people in the neighbourhood said they believed they were connected with the growing insecurity in the capital since General Mohammad Farah Aideded was declared interim president of Somalia on June 15 by a conference of supporters of his United Somali Congress (USC) faction.

On the other hand, a Somali radio station backing Aideded's faction radio attributed the incidents to banditry.

Three other people were also wounded in southern Mogadishu on Sunday when the Wardhigley Islamic Court, run by Murusadeh religious men, attacked and dismantled a roadblock mounted by gunmen. The court security man was

among the wounded.

Meanwhile, six militia businessmen threatened on Sunday to stop operations at the Mogadishu seaport by 12,000 local time (0900 GMT) on Monday, if Gen. Aideded failed to pay them 88 million Somali shillings (\$13,538) they had used to purchase a kofort from the retreating U.N. Operation Somalia (UNOSOM) contractors last March.

The businessmen had deployed the forklift at the port after Gen. Aideded promised to refund the money immediately a government had been formed in Somalia.

It was also reported that around 66 prisoners had broken out from Mogadishu's main jail in the southern part of the city late Friday, taking with them two policemen who were serving them with meals at the time.

Police officer Abdi Farah, who was at the prison's top observation post, fired warning shots but failed to block the escapees, 19 of whom were militiamen of Gen. Aideded's United Somali Congress (USC) faction.

The jail outbreak left only two people still in the century-old prison — one of them lame and the other wounded.

Conflicting reasons were given for the breakout, with one report saying that police officers on duty were given a huge bribe to let the prisoners out, while another alleged that the prisoners' families had threatened to kill the policemen's families in the city if they intervened to stop the breakout.

Ex-Hamas members establish political party

GAZA (Agencies) — Five former members of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, announced in Gaza on Sunday the formation of a new political group partly funded by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

Mahmoud Abu Dan, head of the new Islamic National Al Massar movement and also an officer in the self-rule authority's secret police, told a news conference his party rejected violence but did not recognise Israel's existence.

Mr. Abu Dan said the 1993 Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord was a reality that could not be ignored.

The new party said in a statement it wanted "constructive and civilised dialogue."

"We are delighted to be the first Islamic political movement that contributes to building the imposing structure of the (Palestinian) country," Mr. Abu Dan said.

He told reporters that while he had left Hamas "others do not have this courage. By the emergence of such an Islamic movement, the chance will be created for those who do not have the courage to separate."

Hamas leads Palestinian opposition to the 1993 PLO-Israeli peace deal. Militants have killed scores of Israelis, most in suicide attacks, since the accord.

Mr. Abu Dan said the new party was partly funded by the PNA but did not disclose by how much. Palestinians said they doubted the new party would make a dent in support for Hamas.

Four other ex-members of Hamas attended the press conference with Mr. Abu Dan.

"We will respect the rule of the Palestinian Authority," he said.

"There are others in Hamas who share our opinions. Some will come and join us," said Mr. Abu Dan, who spent five years in Israeli prisons for his activities on behalf of Hamas.

The movement's platform includes the introduction of Sharia law, the removal of Jewish settlements on occupied land and Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state.

All the members of the movement are former Hamas members, Mr. Abu Dan said.

Abu Dan, 34, is a former member of the Izzedine Al Qassam, the military wing of Hamas. He left Hamas a few months ago and joined the Palestinian intelligence.

Sources close to the PNA said Yasser Arafat was backing the group in hopes of persuading Hamas to join the Palestinian self-rule authority.

Mr. Abu Dan said the party had not decided whether it would run in elections for a Palestinian self-rule council.

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DUBAI (R) — A message to the agency said on Sunday that the Gulf war. The message said on Sunday that the Gulf war. The message said on Sunday that the Gulf war.